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Russia
goes to school

A GUIDE TO SOVIET EDUCATION

by BEATRICE KING

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL
A GUIDE TO SOVIET EDUCATION

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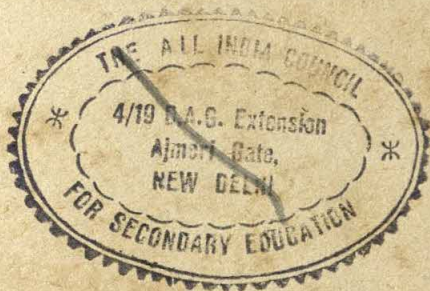
Students at the Mendeleyev Chemico-Technological Institute,
Moscow

RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL

A GUIDE TO SOVIET EDUCATION

By

BEATRICE KING



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BEATRICE KING.

INTRODUCTION

THE purpose of this book is to make available to the interested reader the facts of Soviet education as they are to-day, to describe the system as it is practised and to indicate some of the effects of the war upon it. The book attempts only to deal with *how* the system is organised and run and *what* is taught.

I am very conscious that the interested reader as he proceeds will frequently stop to ask "why", and may be dissatisfied not to find the full answer. To give the full answer, one that will satisfy the author as well as the reader, requires a new unhurried investigation on the spot, which I hope will be possible soon, but would delay for a couple of years the publication of the factual information for which there is so great and insistent a demand now. I have responded to this demand by a plain statement of facts kept up-to-date by the kindness of VOKS—the U.S.S.R. Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries—and by discussions with Soviet educationists who from time to time visit this country.

Some of the "why" of things will be found in my *Changing Man: The Soviet Education System*. I would ask the reader not to judge the present volume by *Changing Man*. The scope and purpose of the two books are different, yet I believe this book does fulfil its object.

Because I have set out to describe, and not to interpret, I may have given the general impression that the Soviet system works perfectly. This of course would be nonsense, as the Russians would be the first to agree. Two thousand years of Christianity have not succeeded in making the world Christian, and it can hardly be surprising that thirty years of Soviet ideology have not yet succeeded in producing a society in which every one of the one hundred and ninety millions is the perfect communist.

The intelligent reader will understand that in practice Soviet education must be compounded of good and bad, the highly

efficient and the inefficient, of enthusiasm and indifference. Side by side with the amazingly widespread enthusiasm for the care of children, one reads of cases where a municipal council and an education authority have been completely neglectful of a children's home.

The teaching profession still has its dull and incompetent practitioners.

There were still in 1944, remote backward areas where parents had to be persuaded to let their children attend school beyond the age of twelve and thirteen. There are cities where Pioneer Houses (Youth Clubs) are badly run. Teacher Institutes and Schools are subjected to the same sort of criticism as are Training Colleges in England. One is tempted to be slangy and to say, "So what?"

It only proves that the Soviet Union is a country of ordinary human beings, that when the political and economic adjustments have been made, the process of education of the young and re-education of the older generation has to begin, and that the educative process is slow and erratic and deeply influenced by conditions.

But certain fundamentals can no longer be challenged. For example, the Soviet conception of the rights of every human being to the richest opportunities; the conception of education as a life process embracing the whole person, and the enthusiasm for education of the many which acts as a corrective on those who retard progress.

I have not been to the Soviet Union since the war so I cannot judge of the relative achievements of Soviet education. There is, however, one yard-stick by which it can be measured, the yard-stick of the Second World War.

A recently backward and almost illiterate country had to face a highly educated country with a most advanced technology on a front of two thousand miles. The industry which equipped the army and kept it supplied with weapons, and the agriculture which fed it, were being run by Soviet-trained people helped by the few specialists of the pre-revolutionary period. The world does not yet know the full story of the improvisation, adaptation, ingenuity and initiative that contributed to the success of the fight against Hitler. It is not yet fully cognisant of the qualities that made it possible to transport vast factories and set them up in wastes in a Russian winter, that outwitted, time and time again, an enemy with great initial advantages, and that kept transport going under impossible condi-

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tions. And during all that period music, art and literature continued. The qualities behind these achievements had to be brought out and given direction.

To-day these same qualities are being directed to reconstruction and to further development. In this peaceful task the same devotion to country, the same love of man, the same intellectual vigour are ensuring the success of the Fourth Five-Year Plan. The men and women who won the war on the Eastern front and are now set to win the peace are the products of Soviet education in a Soviet background. The younger generations are entirely Soviet educated, while the older are Soviet re-educated.

It would appear that education is not so much a matter of academic standard, highly important as that is, as of the ability to adjust oneself successfully to whatever situation life may present. Given an intellectual curiosity which is encouraged and nurtured, men and women will naturally continue to study in their particular sphere and reach a high standard, whereas a high examination standard obtained through cramming, with the exclusion of life as the inevitable concomitant, is not synonymous with a high standard of education.

The standard which the Soviets set themselves is an upward one rising with attainment. Much effort will be needed to implement the law providing for universal compulsory seven-year education and to achieve the good quality that is desired. Much vigilance will be necessary to ensure that all educational institutions are well run.

There appear to be enough alert and able people in the country to provide both the effort and the vigilance. This, allied to the intolerance of avoidable inefficiency, indifference and negligence, augurs well for a healthy system of education.

BEATRICE KING.

London.

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Chapter One

PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

It is not easy to observe a clear demarcation between educational principles and those proper to the sphere of political philosophy or sociology. Yet for an understanding of the development of Soviet education, it is essential to see each in its proper role.

Educational principles follow politico-philosophical ones. Changing economic, political and social conditions are the stimuli which set men and women to think out new educational principles or new adaptations of the old principles, because the changes have rendered the old ones unsatisfactory, inefficient, or even harmful. That is, the old principles cannot in the new conditions produce the type of man required to deal adequately with the possibilities and opportunities being offered by life. Thus, educational principles may be described as the technique of the organisation of education and the methods and the approach to education in any given set of circumstances. Educational principles in this sense are dealt with in the two following chapters.

In this chapter, I shall deal with those principles which, because they shape the whole pattern of the country, because they are based on fundamental laws as the Russians understand them, are basic and prior to any education principle. The Soviet Union shows particularly clearly how the translation into life of these fundamental principles influences educational practice.

The Soviet Union began as a state in the twentieth century, having inherited an almost feudal backwardness. Though it had centres of high scholarship and learning, scientists of world renown, a great musical and theatrical heritage, it was yet one of the most backward countries in the world in 1914. The great majority of its people had lived for centuries under political oppression, in extreme ignorance and in extreme poverty. Except for the oases of progress, the country was a desert of backwardness. Tsarist expan-

sion eastward had added states hostile in politics and religion, which made conditions in 1917, when the revolution occurred, still more complicated and difficult.

In such circumstances, after a war which inflicted a loss of many million citizens and left the country completely disintegrated—whatever industry there had been was ruined—Lenin's party set out to transform this morass into a flowering garden. The process could not be carried out leisurely, for the rest of the world, as expressed in its governments, was actively hostile. There was a desperate urgency to consolidate the revolution, to win time for the proper development of a socialist state which would prepare the way for a communist state. And the "army" for the achievement of this task of unknown and incredible difficulties consisted of untried political theorists and thinkers supported by the proportionately small body of industrial workers, and the illiterate poor peasants.

Of the tools employed by the revolutionary leaders and workers, very important, because its influence was so very profound, was education. Whatever political and economic changes were introduced, they could finally only be consolidated and become fruitful through education.

Thus we see clearly in the Soviet Union what in those countries where change has been gradual is barely recognised—the use of education for the support of the political ideas and ideals of the predominating and leading section of the people. The chapters that follow will help to explain how education has been used in the Soviet Union to make the political, social and moral ideals of this leading section accepted wholeheartedly by the great majority of the people so that one may say the whole country acts as it did during the Second World War and as it is doing in the work of restoration and development, because it is united in aim and purpose.

This is not to say that there were no renegades or collaborators during this war or that there are no hostile or subversive elements to-day; that there are no people who, still remembering their privileges under capitalism, would not welcome a return to capitalism. But the logic of facts proves them to be so small in numbers out of a population of nearly two hundred millions that the overall picture presented is one of full unity on fundamental political principles, a position to which education made a very great contribution.

To-day the Soviet Union is a socialist state striving toward communism. Socialist economic principles based on Marxist-

Leninist theory are already in operation. Thus, there is no private ownership of the means of production and distribution, nor of land, which brings profit from the labour of others. The principle of equality—political, economic, legal and social—for races, nationalities, religions and the sexes has not only been established but is in full operation.

The economic aim periodically reiterated is to outstrip the most advanced industrial countries in the world; to free the people for ever from the fear of want, and to release them from hard drudgery and toil; to provide the leisure and the means for the fullest enjoyment of life in all its rich variety, and thus to release that creative force which the Russians claim resides in all human beings, which in its turn will enrich the treasure-house of human achievement.

Running through all plans and principles is the insistence on the importance of the individual as such, and on the possibilities for greatness in the ordinary man, on the "glorious thing it is to be man". This naturally leads to a concern with the mass of the people, the millions and millions of so-called ordinary men and women, the factory and office workers, and the farm workers and their children. Much educational theory and practice has its origin in this preoccupation with the masses and their children; in the conviction that the educational and cultural standard of the masses can and must be raised.

It was therefore to be expected that every effort would be made to put into effective operation the principle of a classless system of education. This is being achieved by the provision of equality of educational opportunity for all children, irrespective of race, nationality, or creed, irrespective of social origin and parents' income, irrespective of geographical location. This principle is not only the educational expression of Marxist-Leninist politics; it is the practical expression of Soviet Communism and the practical way of achieving the society desired.

Much has been written in the Soviet Union and will continue to be written, on the subject "Communist Education", what it implies and how to achieve it.

Professor Kairov, director of the Academy of Pedagogical science, writing in 1940¹ says: "By communist education we mean the education of an all-round developed person of a communist society. This education for the all-round development includes the sum of

¹ Sovetskaya Pedagogika, No. 6, 1940.

the following: intellectual and manual education, and moral æsthetic and physical education." He then goes on to deal with Stalin's pronouncements on each of these five aspects of communist education, remarking that Stalin is carrying on and developing the teaching of Marx and Engels and Lenin.

Dealing with intellectual education Kairov¹ says: "It postulates first the understanding of the fundamentals of science, second, the development of intellectual abilities and aptitudes and third, the formation of a dialectical-materialist outlook," which requires political education and training in political thinking as an integral part of education. Dealing with this question of political education Stalin said: "The higher the political level . . . of the worker in whatever work, the higher and more fruitful will be the work itself and the more effective the results of that work."²

There is equal stress on the importance of science in education, an importance that has not been diminished since that day, on the 16th May, 1928, when Stalin addressing the Eighth All-Union Congress of the Komsomol³ said: "To defeat the enemy to-day we must know how to build up industry, agriculture, transport, trade. To build, we must have knowledge, we must have science, and to have knowledge we must study."

About polytechnical education, which includes manual as well as science instruction, much has been written. "Stalin," says Kairov, "regards polytechnical education as . . . a broad social movement for a new conception of work . . . which makes it possible through the union of the knowledge of fundamentals of science with labour to advance toward the abolition of the contradiction between intellectual and manual work."

On moral education, Lenin has said: "We must see to it that the whole of education and upbringing and learning of modern Soviet youth shall be directed to their training in communist morals."

Again, according to Kairov, "Stalin recognised (and continues to do so) the very great importance of æsthetic education of the workers of our country" as essential for the full development of the individual.

Professor Rivess's article on the subject of communist education in *SOVIETSKAYA PEDAGOGIKA* of January, 1940, may throw more light on the subject. Communist education "arms the pupils

¹ *Ibid.*

² Voprossi Leninizma, 2nd Edition, p. 598.

³ Young Communist Organisation.

with genuine scientific knowledge, develops in them a communist outlook and convictions, develops the habits of generosity, humanitarianism and of human sympathy: develops profound emotions, and develops all the intellectual capacities and interests of the pupils; it inculcates in them the habits of independent learning, and gives them the skill to apply knowledge in practice; trains communist habits of behaviour; organises and directs social activity and creative self expression outside the school."

It is considered essential that education shall be closely linked with life through all possible means. Text books, which are common to all schools, are written with that aim. For example, Ushakov's Exercises in Spelling for Class IV (ten-eleven years) have chapters dealing with Dnieproges and Magnitogorsk, and different industrial cities whose work is vital to every Soviet child and adult. He uses such terms as "iron ore mine", "metallurgy work," "blast furnace," "coke-ovens," and the like, all of which are explained in relation to Soviet life. "Problems and Exercises in Arithmetic" are based on Soviet industry and all terms have to be explained both in themselves and in their relation to the economic plans, either to those that have already been fulfilled or in which the country is engaged.

The principle of equality of opportunity has not been easy to achieve, not only because of economic backwardness but because of the multi-national character of the Soviet Union. There are something like one hundred and fifty nationalities speaking an even greater number of languages. Most of these nationalities had no written alphabet prior to 1917. But according to the Soviet constitution, every nationality has the right to education in its own language. Before this principle could be put into effective practice a great work had to be carried out in the creation of alphabets and grammars for the written languages, and of text books.¹ Up to date, some fifty new alphabets have been created.

Thus, there has been the conscious use of education for a clear and well-defined purpose—the creation of a communist citizen who will create the communist state. It is a purpose with a long distance aim, which the country has set out to achieve in stages. Each stage reflects not only the national but the international situation and each stage leaves its mark on education, both on its principles and practice.

¹ For a detailed description of this see my contribution in *Unesco Report on Fundamental Education*, H.M. Stationery Office, London; and *Changing Man: The Soviet Education System*, Gollancz.

It is in this light that the various changes in Soviet education must be regarded.

Let us take the first period, the revolutionary and transition stage. It was essential for the time being to turn the peoples' gaze toward the new horizon, essential to have a complete break with the past. So for a period, the great Russian educationists were ignored and search was made abroad for the new educational theories and practice. Any new idea that had the appearance of being revolutionary was accepted and adopted. Freedom for the child, and experimentation, were the watchwords of that period. In the first years, the schools were almost entirely run by the pupils, and the universities by the students. This first stage was followed by the adoption of all those methods heralded abroad as the salvation of society: of the Complex Method, the Project Method, the Decroly Method, the Dalton Plan, all practised on a vast scale. All examinations were abolished, for political as well as educational reasons.

Politics and labour were the dominating factors. The country needed a youth that would support communism and at the same time would help to restore the war-damaged economic and industrial apparatus and proceed to the development of the industrial basis for security and life. Education in that period concentrated on the community. Up to the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan the training was directed to collective living and the individual as such was temporarily minimised. It was essential to bring up citizens who would put the interests of the community before their own personal interests, and until such time as conditions eliminated the conflict between the two, the community had to be stressed.

Throughout this whole period—and this is a permanent feature of Soviet education—there was careful observation by communist educationists of the effects on the individual and the results for the community of the education that was being carried on. Educational journals of 1926 were already discussing and challenging some of the principles and practices, and modifications appeared in consequence. The introduction of polytechnical education into all schools was delayed until 1928 because not till then did conditions exist when the training of teachers and the theoretical and practical research into teaching techniques for the subject and into workshop equipment could begin on any adequate scale. Only now was it possible to demand that local authorities set about the provision of the necessary workshops in the school.

In 1932 with the fulfilment of the First Five-Year Plan the foundations of heavy industry had been laid, and the Second Five-Year Plan could pay attention to the more immediate improvement of the standard of living. Fifteen years of intensive communist education was bearing fruit. A younger generation, accepting communism often with great enthusiasm, was entering the schools as teachers, and industry and agriculture as workers and managers. The majority of the pre-revolutionary university teaching staffs had themselves undergone a process of re-education and were prepared to give loyal service to the new society. The time was judged ripe to carry through the reorganisation of education which had been discussed over a long period from many angles.

The Project Method and Dalton Plan were dropped throughout the whole Union. Responsibility for the school was laid upon the head, and for the university upon the rector. Syllabuses were revised, new text books were to be published, examinations were re-introduced. This stage, too, saw the beginning of the end of political supervision as such in the classroom and in the school. Long before the achievement of the Second Five-Year Plan the post of school political "director" was abolished.

The period following 1932, a period of development, of economic growth and political maturing, saw the gradual redressing of the balance between the community and the individual. The process has continued until to-day the child as an individual holds a supremely important place in Soviet educational theory and practice.

The reader may here ask why was the Dalton Plan—recognised everywhere as highly individualistic—adopted soon after the revolution when the political emphasis was on the community, and why has it not been restored when the emphasis has changed to the individual?

The Dalton Plan was adopted in a modified form and like the other new education techniques, because it was experimental and had received the stamp of "progressive". It had never been examined in relation to Marxist theory nor could it then have been put to the test of Soviet needs. When discussion began and the testing time arrived it was found that the Dalton Plan led to "the disappearance of personal responsibility, to a lowering of the role of the teacher, and, in many cases, to a state of affairs in which no attention was paid to the individual work of the child."¹

¹ Decree of Central Committee of C.P. August 25th, 1932.

Consideration for the individual personality does not, for Soviet educationists, imply treating the child either all the time or only, as an individual. Neither is the emphasis on the individual in opposition or to the exclusion of the community. There is no longer a conflict between the two. It is an emphasis on the individual as a member of a community. The regard for the individual is expressed not so much through methods of teaching as through teacher-pupil relationships and through the special provision for the full development of each individual pupil's personality. Soviet educationists believe that the Dalton Plan is a method which does not produce a sound basis for education. They have not been convinced by evidence from abroad that the cost is commensurate with results.

Under American influence, mental and intelligence tests and that branch of educational psychology Americans called pedology, which relied much on these tests, had become very widely adopted. Every school of any size had its pedologist. Children were assessed on the results of the tests and those that failed to conform to standard tests of work and behaviour were classed as difficult or backward.

As far back as 1928 the authority of the pedologist and the validity of his findings had been challenged. Between 1932 and 1936 there were many conferences on the subject and controversy was fast and furious between opponents and supporters. Much, very much, was written about the subject, and much investigation and observation carried out. There was particularly a check-up on the schools for "difficult" children whose numbers were increasing alarmingly. The result of all this educational activity was a complete rejection of the theory arrived at by the pedologists, that there was, and always would be, a section of children inherently inferior in intelligence and for whose mental development nothing much could be done. (These were not children that could be certified as mentally deficient but of just ordinary "low" intelligence.)

Again, this theory is in contradiction to the Soviet belief in the perfectibility of man, to their belief that man's characteristics are the result of the action and interaction of environment and man, which in due course affects the expression of hereditary characteristics. They adduce much proof for this belief from their own experience and from history.

With the rejection of the theory went the abolition of pedology as a branch of psychology, and authority in the classroom and responsibility for the general assessment of pupils were handed over to the

teacher, who, it was argued, through daily contact and knowledge of home conditions, and through training, was the right person to wield the authority and discharge the responsibility.

All forms of mental and intelligence testing were abolished at the same time, the argument being that they had proved to be unreliable and misleading, and that they could not be genuinely scientific. There is no agreed scientific definition of intelligence, it is argued, nor is it known whether, in fact, such a measurable entity exists. What is known is that reaction to environment, either free or in controlled experiments, is conditioned by biological heredity, by the social past and social tradition and by the immediate environment. As an illustration, up to 1936, while the course covered by the primary school amongst literate nations was four years, for backward nations, such as the alphabetic tribes inhabiting the Far North, it was five years. By 1936, the effect of eighteen years of Soviet environment in raising "intelligence" was so marked that the extra year was no longer necessary. Increasing numbers attend secondary schools and higher education institutions with benefit. The increase is greater in rural and formerly backward areas amongst whom "intelligence" was supposed to be lower. All this is adduced as testimony to the correctness of the Soviet attitude. In support of their contention we are reminded that it was planned in 1937 to have secondary education (up to eighteen years) for all children of the Union by 1942.

It was the national economic stringency arising out of the threat of war (the Munich appeasement) and then out of war itself, which has put back the fulfilment of this plan, and not a belief in the inherent incapacity of any section of the nation's children to benefit from secondary education.

Intelligence tests to be at all scientific, it is argued, would have to be discarded frequently and as frequently replaced by new ones, and they must vary greatly with environment—a great waste of educational forces, when better results can be achieved by more obvious and simpler means. The Russians are great believers in the simple common-sense approach.

As selection for higher, or vocational education does not take place until fourteen plus, there is a longer period for the development of those aptitudes which are likely to be the most stable and of which the teacher who has been with the same children for a number of years must be aware. As the opportunities for higher education

and specialised training increase yearly in response to the agreed political aim of raising the standard of living for all the millions inhabiting the U.S.S.R., the need is for a test which will show up genuine unsuitability, not for one which is to select a few out of many worthy candidates, runs the argument. In such a case it is held that the ordinary examination, so well designed to test knowledge, ability and intelligence, plus the school record which is based as much on the teacher's knowledge of the pupil's personality as on mental attainment, is the best method yet discovered for testing. Finally, the facilities for training latent abilities as they come to light at any age make all mistakes easily rectifiable.

A serious objection made to tests is that they tend to become a vested interest on the part of those who produce them and their educational purpose tends to be forgotten or neglected, which was in fact the case in the Soviet Union.

It is not testing that Soviet educationists object to, but what they consider the wrong kind of test for a wrong purpose. Tests have been introduced within the last two years for manipulative dexterity, and for degrees of aptitude in the varied manual processes in industry, particularly in engineering. These tests are applied in the schools or courses which give the actual training.

It is in the leisure circles and clubs, where the attraction may be the presence of a friend as much as the urge to a certain form of self expression, that the latent abilities under friendly encouragement blossom forth. It is in these circles, with their informal atmosphere and their emotionally satisfying background that difficulties, unresolved in the classroom and likely to form a barrier to learning, are explained away or resolved. The co-operation between class teacher, circle instructor and the home provides the teacher with an additional key to the pupils' mind and personality. All this seems to the Soviet educationist much more likely to result in an accurate appraisal of a pupil's aptitudes, abilities and personality than any tests.

If the purpose of testing is to discover the suitability of children for different types of education then, insist the Russians, the teacher, aided by the free activity in the different school circles and clubs, is likely to be more accurate than any intelligence tests.

The year 1937 brought a major change in Soviet education when Polytechnical instruction was abandoned. The explanation given was that it had ceased to be the study of the scientific principles of production and had become handwork only, an activity that could

very well be carried on in clubs and so release time for scientific studies, which were to play an all-important role in the achievement of the succeeding plans, and for native language and literature with the standard of which there was serious dissatisfaction.

The growing might of Hitler and the appeasement policy followed by the democracies had their effect on Soviet education. The qualities which the school was now expected to develop in the children were such as would make them staunch and successful in the defence of their country. By 1939 military education in the ordinary school was expected to be taken seriously and text books published in 1942 had a heavy syllabus for military training, which was, in fact, mostly athletic training up to the age of thirteen-fourteen. Even with the older pupils, judging from reports in *OUCHITESKAYA GAZETA*,¹ this training was not very thorough or very military. Those who know the Russian people well will readily understand this, for they are a people that dislikes militarism.

The Russians, believing that another war was unlikely, and believing too in the good sense of the common people of the world to prevent a re-emergence of fascism, abolished military education altogether for girls and only retained it for boys for two hours a week in Classes IX and X (sixteen and seventeen years).

In the same year a decree was passed releasing the eighteen- and nineteen-year call-up groups from military service and directing them into industry.

The year 1940 saw two developments which aroused much criticism and surprise abroad. One dealt with the creation of a labour reserve and the other with the introduction of fees for certain stages in education.

The permanent elimination of unemployment meant that there was no longer that reserve pool of labour that could be drawn upon at need. Having so wide a choice of work, labour did not always flow into the most essential industries. At the same time, the imminence of war, apart from the general economic planning, demanded the assurance of a regular flow of labour into basic industries. A decree was therefore passed making compulsory the mobilisation of one million boys (girls were later accepted) of fourteen years of age into schools for the training of skilled workers for the basic industries.²

¹ The teachers' own newspaper.

² Detailed description is given in Chapter Six, p. 73, *et seq.*

Every hundred adults in a rural area had to nominate two youngsters, and cities were divided into districts for nomination. The nominee must be a willing party. It was also open to any youths or girls to apply for a place voluntarily.

Before the decree was put into effect a great campaign to popularise these schools was carried out. So successful was the campaign that in the first weeks the voluntary applications exceeded the eight hundred thousand places then available.

So great, however, is the demand for pupils by the schools of every type which give vocational training, that these trade schools have never yet had their full complement, and in some districts the number of youngsters has fallen far below their quota. No punitive measures of any kind would seem to have been taken, but there has been public reprimand and blame for particular rural or municipal councils, and especially for the local communist party for dereliction of duty.

Up till 1940, all education from the cradle to the grave was free. In that year fees were introduced (*a*) for the last three years in the full secondary school, (*b*) for technical and professional schools (fourteen-fifteen to seventeen-eighteen or nineteen)—two hundred roubles a year in the cities, one hundred and fifty roubles in the country—and (*c*) for higher education, four hundred roubles in main urban centres and three hundred in rural centres, with five hundred roubles a year for music, art and theatre institutions. There are, however, a great many grounds for exemption from fees, such as, sick and disabled parents; attaining an Honours Class either in the final school-leaving examination or during the University course and, during the war, having parents serving with the Forces (by decree passed in July 1941). This last applied to men and officers of junior rank. By a decree of 1944, all who have lost parents in the war, and children who have been adopted for any reason, are exempt from all fees. Further, good work brings with it scholarships ranging from one hundred and forty to four hundred roubles a month, according to attainment.

The introduction of fees was due partly to increasing state expenditure on education, simultaneously with rising incomes, but more to insistence on a continued improvement of the academic standard both in the secondary school and in the university and institute.

The actual contribution which the fees made was small enough.

In 1941 it amounted to three per cent of the whole educational expenditure, and less than two per cent of the higher education expenditure. It is considerably less to-day when we take into account all the categories entitled to remission of fees.

The danger of undervaluing services which are supplied free was not absent from the Soviet Union. It appears that some boys and girls did not give of their best in schools and universities, knowing they could scrape through without any cost to their parents. It was reported at the end of the first year of the introduction of fees that there was considerable improvement in work, particularly in higher education institutions, and, because the fees were low and incomes had been increasing, only those students who were not prepared to apply themselves to their studies with the required assiduity dropped the course. The numbers in any faculty that dropped out appeared to be negligible.

With the great increase in wages and salaries, and the decreasing cost of living, and with no increase at all in the education fees, there are not likely to be many families (if any at all) where children with ability would be deprived of opportunities for secondary or higher education. Again, the fact that admission to the eighth class in the secondary school and into university depends on passing an entrance examination removes any danger of money's conferring privileges.

In 1943, there was a change which was very startling to the outside world. Co-education, so long regarded by many as a bedrock principle of Soviet education was given up. Separate education was adopted in the first year in the Senior Secondary Schools (seven-eighteen years) in seventy-one large cities. It has been extended to all Senior Secondary Schools in cities, industrial settlements and District Senior Schools in rural areas, and to Junior Secondary Schools (seven-fourteen or fifteen) in cities and industrial settlements where numbers warrant it. In Primary Schools co-education still exists, as in fact it does even in Secondary Schools where numbers are small. The staffs are mixed, and it is still possible for a woman to be head of a boys' Secondary School. Even in the Suvorov or Army Cadet Schools there are women teachers.

In the trade schools, too, education is generally but, by no means always, separate for boys and girls. In the technical schools and all higher educational institutions, education is mixed. Except for the subject military education,¹ the curriculum is the same for boys

¹ Only taken by sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds.

and girls everywhere, with the addition of housecraft, which so far appears to be chiefly needlework, and elementary child psychology for girls. This equates the time given to military training by boys.

The teachers for both boys' and girls' schools are trained in mixed colleges and universities, thus ensuring the same academic approach. The same facilities for careers are open to girls as to boys.

There had been considerable discussion of co-education in educational circles some time prior to the change. The first request in 1940, of the Moscow City Education Department for separate schools, was turned down. In 1942 Moscow was asked to experiment for a year with a number of schools. The results appeared so satisfactory that they convinced the authorities that the increasing demand for separate schools should be satisfied. The demand, however, was not by any means unanimous, either on the part of the teachers or the parents, and a great explanatory campaign was carried out before the principle for separate schools as enunciated was adopted. It may well be that some teachers would still prefer co-education in the Secondary School, but they are loyally carrying out the decree. Girls who had had some years in co-education school did not in all cases like the separation.

Many explanations and reasons were given for the change. It was pointed out in the first place that co-education in the Soviet Union had been adopted not so much for educational as for political reasons. It was the swiftest and surest way to bring about the reality of the equality of rights and status granted to women by the new Soviet constitution. Equally it helped in the drive for universal education.

Both these objects have been achieved, the equality of the sexes to such an extent that women captains of cargo boats, or women professors in military academies, are taken for granted.

As we have seen, new problems were continually being thrown up by the country's development. One arose directly out of co-education, which in the Soviet Union was one hundred per cent. Girls and boys even did physical training together, but, as a concession to sex, certain exercises were repeated a greater number of times by boys than by girls. No allowance was made for the natural differences between male and female, nor was consideration given to the fact that there is a difference between the functions of motherhood and fatherhood. Indeed there was no preparation for either.

A factor of some influence was the demand for an increasingly

higher academic standard of work and the demand for better discipline, that is, a more serious attitude to the responsibilities of being a Soviet citizen. War and the threat of war may also have influenced the deliberations which led to the decision to abolish co-education in the Secondary Schools. Different Soviet educationists gave different reasons for the change. One that was generally accepted at first, but is not held universally to-day, is that the different rates of physiological development of boys and girls make a mixed class of the same age group an unequal unit psychologically and mentally, with unequal responses, so that teaching becomes difficult and the desired standard of work and behaviour cannot be attained. Another reason given was the need to prepare girls for the vocation of motherhood and the need to teach sex physiology to both which, it is argued, cannot be given to a mixed class of adolescents.

Since military training has been reduced to two hours a week for classes nine and ten, and this is to be mostly physical training, the military reason certainly does not hold good to-day, if it ever did.

When all the reasons given are summed up they amount to this: that under existing Soviet conditions it is easier, provided numbers allow for it, to achieve the academic standard and the intelligent discipline required in separate schools than in co-educational schools.

The leisure activities in the non-school organisations, such as Pioneer Clubs, Technical Stations, etc., are carried on by both boys and girls in mixed groups. The practice, common in many schools in England, of entertaining a school of the opposite sex to a dance or party is greatly encouraged. There are holiday camps attended by boys and girls. The striking absence from Soviet life of artificial stimulation by posters, advertisements, films, etc., helps to prevent the unhealthy sex-consciousness that might arise as a result of separate schools.

We should remember that Soviet educationists never made the claims for co-education made in other countries. It was for them a method of organising education rather than a principle. They have always insisted that education can only achieve great ends if it receives economic, political and social support, never by educational techniques alone. Further we should not forget the flexibility of Soviet education. If a stage of development in the country's life is reached when co-education for Secondary Schools again becomes a desirable method of organising schools, we may be sure it will be adopted once more. In the meantime, there is watchfulness to

prevent such absurdities as the suggestion that came from one teacher that there should be feminine story books for girls and masculine ones for boys.

We should not be confused and assume that because co-education no longer serves a desirable purpose in the Soviet Union it therefore has no place in countries where different political and economic systems prevail. And finally it should be pointed out that the great majority of Soviet children, living as they do in small rural communities, must still attend co-educational schools.

There has been no serious change in the attitude to religion where education is concerned. As in many of the States of the U.S.A., in New Zealand and in other countries, the Soviet schools are secular. There is no direct anti-religious propaganda in the schools of to-day though all education tends to be rationalistic and scientific. There are now theological seminaries in Moscow and Leningrad, and Mohammedans also have their training centres.

There will doubtless be further changes as new situations arise, and judging by past practice we may expect much serious consideration and discussion by the teaching profession, and by the community generally, before changes are adopted. The watchfulness to prevent abuses and excesses—which, for example, led in 1936 to the abolition of the status of “model” schools because by that time they were developing a selective snobbery—continues. Ever larger numbers among the general community are becoming actively conscious of their responsibility for their children’s education, so that the principles and purpose of education have increasing support on all sides. The community does not however give uncritical support. Through a variety of means the people are learning to understand education, both its principles and scope. This helps to give an intelligent direction to the Russian habit of self-criticism, freely expressed at meetings and in the press. Thus the Soviet school while fully supported by the community is at the same time challenged by it to further improvement.

Chapter Two

THE ORGANISATION OF EDUCATION

PLANNING

To see the Soviet Union in proper perspective, whether from the educational, economical or political angle, one must always bear in mind its geography and history, as well as its political structure. The vastness of the land, and the remoteness and isolation of many of its inhabitants, require special measures of planning and supervision to ensure a common standard of education for all. At the same time care must be taken to encourage local initiative and those local features whose development will enrich education and life generally. Much wisdom and skill is needed to achieve a balance between central control and direction and local freedom.

Education takes its place in the national economic plan with every other aspect of the country's life. The State Planning Commission, or Gosplan, has its department for education and culture. Educational needs are integrated with economic needs—industrial, agricultural, administrative—and are related to the ultimate goal of a highly educated, highly trained and cultivated people. These national needs in their turn are affected by the prevailing international situation. Thus, for example, Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler at Munich affected the plans for compulsory secondary education up to eighteen years, which as stated in the previous chapter it had been hoped to carry through by 1942.¹ Information on its requirements for education as affected by development plans is sent by an education body or an institution to its superior authority until it reaches the Gosplans of the Union Republics. Here the information is analysed, collated and considered in its relation to other phases of life. The republics send their reports and demands to All-Union Gosplan because some of their requirements may make demands on All-Union ministries, and because a Plan

¹ See p. 12.

is in the first instance one for the whole Union. A development plan which correlates all aspects of education and covers accommodation, equipment, and staffing, is then issued from the centre downwards, appropriate for each organisational unit for a five-year period, which is also sub-divided into yearly, and where applicable quarterly, periods. There is no restriction whatever on exceeding the plan, and there is a periodic check-up on fulfilment. There is great encouragement through nation-wide public recognition, through the award of banners and of additional grants, for overfulfilment of plans. These have been found useful incentives for the development of local initiative for which there appears to be unlimited scope.

ADMINISTRATION

The U.S.S.R. is a union of sixteen republics of equal status, each with the right of secession. Many of the Union Republics, as they are called, have within their confines large areas inhabited by ethnographically homogeneous peoples who form a nationality sometimes of considerable size and importance. These areas are known as Autonomous Republics, one degree lower in political status than Union Republics. Each type of republic has its Ministry of Education,¹ responsible for the work within its boundaries. A Ministry of Education of a Union Republic has final responsibility for the whole of the republic and therefore has a certain control and direction over that of the Autonomous Republics within its boundaries. For example, the R.S.F.S.R.² Ministry can, and does, issue instructions and directives to the ministries of Yakutsk or the Kabardino-Balkaria Autonomous Republic. In the educational Press one may frequently read the Union Republic minister's criticisms and reprimands of an Autonomous Ministry of Education.

There are different administrative bodies responsible for different types of education. The Ministry of Education administers everything that may be covered by the term "general", that is non-specialised education, with the addition of most of the teacher training and most of the out-of-school provision for leisure. This covers primary and secondary schools (both junior and senior), the teacher-training schools, teachers' institutes, education bureaux, education laboratories, some education research institutes, general adult education, and, in those cases where an industrial unit in a

¹ Known as Commissariat until 1946.

² Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic—the largest of the sixteen.

district is very small, the nursery-infant schools or kindergarten.

Until 1946 there was a Committee for Higher Education attached to the Council of Ministers (formerly Council of People's Commissars). In that year a separate Union Ministry for Higher Education was set up. This ministry has sole responsibility for universities and for a great many important single-faculty institutes.¹ A Committee for the Arts and a Committee for Physical Culture attached to the Council of Ministers each administer the education for their subject. The provision of specialised technical education comes within the competence of the Ministries, and industrial or agricultural administrations, known as trusts, who require a particular kind of specialist. They are responsible for single-faculty institutes, technical schools, agricultural schools, evening technical courses, industrial or agricultural academies. Every one of the ministries of a Union republic has a chief administration for Higher Education subordinate to the Ministry for Higher Education. To illustrate how this works let us take for example the Ministry for Light Industry which has a number of trusts for the production of consumer goods. The trusts are organised regionally. A furniture trust for a region will require skilled craftsmen and designers for the actual production of the articles, and specialists in the technology of the materials used, that is scientists. The furniture trust will run technical schools for the training of the craftsmen, and may itself, if it is an important regional trust, run higher education institutes for the training of specialists, or this higher education may come within the purview of the ministry which will also take responsibility for the research work essential for the improvement and development of its industry. As further examples, the Ministry for Aviation has its aeronautics institutes for training specialists and for research, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has institutes for the training of its diplomats.

Training for the basic industries was in 1940 put into the hands of the then newly created Union Ministries of Labour Reserves. These Ministries are responsible for the two-year industry schools and for the six months factory apprentice schools.

The committee for the Arts administers technicums and institutes which train executants in all the arts, as well as composers, teachers and professors for the arts. Research in the arts is carried on in the institutes.

¹ See Appendix V.

The Committee for Physical Culture administers technicums and institutes which train instructors for schools, for the different types of teacher training colleges, for universities, for the children's clubs and sports schools¹ and for the adult clubs. Much research is being carried on in these institutes.

In addition to all these bodies the All-Union Co-operative Society administers much of the vocational training for its workers.

Now let us return to a Ministry of Education to see how that works. A Ministry has its departments for the different sections of its work such as pre-school, primary and secondary, teacher training, out-of-school activities, building and equipment, curricula and syllabus, methods, etc., with a director for each. There are commissions, cross-linked so as to deal with a subject from every point of view, which sit regularly and report on conditions and make suggestions. The minister is a member of the Council of Ministers to which Gosplan, the State Planning Commission is attached, and can thus make his or her voice heard and his opinions considered on the plan for education. He or she takes part in the deliberations and discussions of the Council of Ministers on all national problems, so that the link between education and life begins at the highest point of the administrative apparatus. Each ministry appoints its inspectorate and the heads of its schools. As already mentioned, each Union ministry is responsible for the text books, for the curricula and for the syllabus in outline, all of which are common to all schools.

A ministry administers the funds for the education for which it is responsible. In accordance with the State plans, the State budget allots the necessary finance to carry out the plan. Each republic has its own plan and budget and makes its own allotment for its education. The money comes from the same sources as all state funds: from the trade turnover tax, agricultural tax, and to a lesser extent, from income tax. Every administrative unit has its own income and expenditure budget in which education has its place. Allocations are made direct to the school for its needs so that every head controls the school expenditure and buys direct the text books, stationery, visual aids, etc., and is free to spend money within the budget as he or she thinks may be best for the school. There is strict book-keeping which is regularly audited, and any items may be challenged.

In addition to official allocations there is considerable voluntary financial contribution made locally. This was particularly the case,

¹ These are attended by children out of school time.

and was of great value, during the war, and it has not diminished since. In any town, rural district, or collective farm, the parents, the farm management, a trade union or professional organisation may bear the expenses of an improvement in or addition to their local education. These local voluntary contributions take on a variety of forms, such as the building of new schools, repairs and redecorations for the new school year, the provision of special equipment or facilities for some kind of activity, additional food for the school dining-room, etc., etc.

The specialised education and training is financed by the bodies responsible for each particular type and the crèche and nursery-infant schools by the factories whose workers they serve.

There is much decentralisation of authority. The *oblast* (region) which is the first administrative sub-division in a republic, is, through the Oblastny Education Administration, responsible for general education and out-of-school facilities within its boundaries. The *Oblast* is divided into Raayons (cp. counties) each with its Education Department. Cities have their city Education Authorities, in turn sub-divided into borough Education Authorities. In rural areas a number of villages are grouped into a Rural District Education Authority. In each case the director of education is appointed by the executive committee of the Soviet or elected council, from the Oblastny Soviet down to the city and borough Soviet. The education committee on a council is appointed by its executive committee from its elected members; those with educational experience either in a professional or voluntary capacity having precedence. The education authority has to approve the appointment of teachers, which is made by the Head. It is concerned with school building and the upkeep of schools; it has to be consulted on any grave measures affecting the school which a head-teacher proposes to make. Every type of Education Authority must show active interest in the provision of facilities for the improvement of teachers in their profession. Each is responsible for the out-of-school provision for leisure within its administrative area.

THE INSPECTORATE

Inspectors are appointed by each ministry of education, an essential qualification for appointment being some years teaching experience. There is no All-Union inspectorate. Their duties are many and their responsibilities considerable. Their task is to raise

the standard of education and discipline in the schools to which they are attached. They are present at lessons and examine the work of the pupils. If in the opinion of an inspector a lesson has been given badly, he may call the teacher out after school and analyse it in detail to show what was wrong. He may take the next lesson himself to show how it should be done. His criticism must always be constructive. He co-operates very closely with the head and he shares in some measure responsibility for the school's reputation. Together with the head he can recommend a teacher for an award or honour. There is no general inspection lasting several days as there is in England. To help them in their work, regular three month's courses are organised for inspectors while an institute for inspectors provides longer courses.

The Soviet system of administration sets out to ensure that the schools for the common people, however distant or remote from a city, shall reach a rising common standard. At the same time it sets out to encourage local initiative in every possible way. It makes considerable allowance for any differences in local conditions.

The common or "stable" text books ensure that the basic knowledge for each subject is the same throughout the union and ensures that the knowledge is up to date. It is left to each teacher to supplement the "stable" text book by whatever material he can find. The common outline syllabus ensures that the main facts of a subject are taught to all children, while the scope given for individual expression and elaboration of the theme prevents an undesirable uniformity. The fixed time-table is never adhered to so rigidly that an exception cannot be made. On one occasion boys and girls of a class ten were handed over to me during a literature lesson and we spent the time learning about each other's schools and discussing literature in the U.S.S.R. and Britain.

The teacher in the classroom has a direct say in education as it affects him or her. Before a syllabus is adopted by the ministry of education it is thoroughly discussed by the teachers and the reports resulting from these discussions are sent to the ministry which treats them very seriously. Sometimes a syllabus is used by a school in draft form for a year and is modified according to the recommendations of the teacher using it. I have known instances where text books were given to teachers in manuscript to test their suitability.

Out from the centre along numerous communication lines go suggestions, plans, drafts and recommendations. Back to the centre

along equally numerous lines of communication, come from the periphery, picking up additions on the way, criticisms, reports, suggestions and opinions. The centre—the Ministry—analyses, collates, sums up the wide and varied experience and based on this, as well as on the demands of the national economy, new decrees, new suggestions and instructions go out.

ATTENDANCE

The Government wages a continuous fight to ensure one hundred per cent school attendance for the last three years of the junior secondary school, eleven–fourteen years. As long ago as 1937¹ a decree was issued prohibiting the employment of school children in school time in work on collective farms, or their employment in looking after babies while mother is at work. The collective farm management was instructed to provide transport to and from school where it was required. The departments of education and agriculture were instructed to carry out an educational campaign among the collective farms to get their full co-operation for compulsory education up to fifteen.

In a letter dated November 28th, 1937, No. 23–24, the Public Prosecutor dealt with the unsatisfactory situation as regards the universal achievement of the Seven-Year School. He ordered the district public prosecutors to check up on the local education authorities as to whether they took the necessary measures with parents or others responsible who broke the law on compulsory education. Information on every parent who broke this law was to be sent to the Public Prosecutor of the R.S.F.S.R. The penalties for keeping a child from school for inadequate reasons included warnings, fines, or thirty days' compulsory labour.

The Third Five-Year Plan, 1938–1942, provided for Ten-Year Schools in all cities, rural district centres, and industrial settlements, and Seven-Year Schools in all villages and in all national republics. This programme was, of course, interrupted by the war when need compelled the employment of girls and boys of thirteen–fourteen years in factories and farms. Indeed, numbers of youngsters left school at an earlier age of their own accord and insisted on “doing their bit” in factory or farm. In the Fourth Five-Year Plan serious steps are being taken to ensure one hundred per cent compulsory general education up to fourteen plus. By the end of the period it is

¹ The age-range was twelve–fifteen years.

expected, in spite of colossal war devastation, that ninety-five per cent of the rural child population will be completing the Seven-Year School and fifty per cent of them will be attending the Ten-Year School. As mentioned in another chapter, plans are afoot to add a year to the secondary school and make that period last eleven years.

During the Third Five-Year Plan the Presidium of the Moscow City Council issued a decree, on November 7th, 1939, prohibiting children of school age from being gainfully employed in any capacity whatever. The sale of alcoholic drinks and beer to minors was prohibited. Restaurants and public houses, cafés, etc., selling liquor, were prohibited from admitting children under sixteen in the evenings. (They should be at school during the daytime.)

Anyone responsible for the employment of school children was answerable before the law, and, when found guilty, punished either by fine or compulsory labour.

Instructions continue to be issued to local authorities to see that all possible obstacles to one hundred per cent attendance are removed. Transport, clothing and footwear, school feeding, school heating in winter, must be dealt with, and where necessary there must be full provision of services and commodities.

Again, on January 25th, 1943, the Public Prosecutor of the R.S.F.S.R. issued an order (No. 416) dealing with measures necessary to ensure one hundred per cent attendance. These were to establish supervision over local authorities to see that they take all possible steps to achieve the desired end. Moscow again adopted additional measures to ensure full attendance at school.

On July 14th, 1943, the then Council of People's Commissars—now the Council of Ministers—of the R.S.F.S.R.—decreed (1) "To approve the instructions on the Organisation of the Registration of all children between the ages of eight (now seven) and fifteen (now fourteen) and on the measures for controlling the fulfilment of the law on compulsory universal education". (2) "To make it obligatory on the Councils of Commissars (Ministers) of the Autonomous Republics and Regional Executives to set up the strictest control on the fulfilment of the said instructions by all the city and district executives and by settlement and village councils of workers' deputies."

The Instructions give in detail the methods by which a full and complete registration is to be achieved in both urban and rural areas, and name the people responsible for carrying this out.

THE EDUCATIONAL LADDER

All education is state education. There are no private schools whatever. The system is very simple, though it naturally becomes educationally complex after the junior secondary school (seven-fourteen years) stage, because of the great variety of educational facilities provided. Compulsory general education since 1943 begins at seven years and continues till the fourteenth birthday has been passed. This applies to the whole Union, and every effort is made, as already shown, to see that the law is fully carried out everywhere.

Though compulsory general education ends at fourteen plus, there is a further education period for all boys and girls before they take up a job, ranging from two to four years according to the work for which they are training. Here, too, war conditions have prevented the full implementation of the regulations, but again steps are being taken to ensure one hundred per cent fulfilment. One measure taken is the re-enactment of decrees, accompanied by propaganda, urging their fulfilment. Thus, because the first decrees on compulsory education to fifteen years, published in 1932—at the completion of the First Five-Year Plan—were not completely carried out, they were re-enacted in 1937, at the completion of the Second Five-Year Plan. This decree gave detailed instructions to local education authorities on school building and teacher training, particularly in rural areas which received the greatest attention. Between 1933 and 1938, sixteen thousand seven-year schools were built in the country districts. Figures for the Soviet pre-war year, 1940–1941,¹ showed that in rural areas in the R.S.F.S.R., 90.2 per cent of pupils who finished the Primary—Four-Year—Schools entered the Seven-Year School and remained there until they reached fifteen years, while 43.3 per cent of those who finished the Seven-Year School entered the secondary (ten-year) school and remained there until they reached eighteen years of age.

The first stage in education is known as pre-school and covers the age-range three–seven years. Under three, children come under the Ministry of Health. Attendance at pre-school educational institutions is voluntary.

The second stage is the primary school (seven–eleven years). Pupils of the primary school, provided they have passed the examination at the end of the fourth year, go on to the junior secondary or Seven-Year School which brings them up to fourteen plus years. In

¹ The education course was then eight–eighteen.

rural districts there are still very many four-year schools, that is, buildings with only four classes which are known as Primary Schools. Schools which accommodate both primary and middle school, that is from seven–fourteen plus years, are known as Junior Secondary or Seven-Year Schools. In all cities, and in industrial settlements and rural centres, there are Senior Secondary Schools which include all the three stages—primary, middle and senior and have pupils from seven–seventeen plus years. The number in a Senior Secondary School in a large city is round about nine hundred, with about twenty-two classes numbered one–ten, thus giving two or three parallel classes.

Pupils leaving a primary school in a rural district will pass on to the nearest Junior Secondary School. In such places as the tundra beyond the Arctic, or the desert areas, or remote mountain regions, conditions make boarding establishments indispensable for the Seven-Year School. In the majority of cases in the country there are sufficient Junior Secondary Schools to make a daily journey possible. Instructions were issued in August 1947 by the Ministry of Education of the R.S.F.S.R. for the organisation of hostels to ensure a Seven-Year School for all children in rural areas. Boarding with families is encouraged.

From the middle stage in the Junior Secondary School in a rural area, those who pass the examination at the end of the seventh year and desire to go on to further academic studies will go into the senior stage of the Senior Secondary School. Many country children will have to become boarders. In a Senior Secondary School in a city, transfer from the middle to the senior stage is merely a matter of going up to another floor of the same school building.

When compulsory general education ends, there is a division into three main streams. Roughly eight hundred thousand boys and girls go to schools which train for major industries and provide a two-year course. Another stream goes into professional or technical schools, which are all monotekhnical; that is, all pupils in one school are trained for the same speciality. The course varies from three to five years. The third stream, comprising the more academically gifted, either remains in the same school or goes to the Senior Secondary School in another district. From this stage the majority go on to higher education, which comprises universities and many single-faculty institutes.

In addition to all the above, there is the variety of special schools, to be described in later chapters.

Chapter Three

DISCIPLINE AND METHODS

RUSSIANS are much like human beings anywhere. They have the same tendencies to virtue or vice, they share the same wisdom and the same foolishness. Like men everywhere they respond to environment, and their environment is far from perfect. The war destroyed much of what they had achieved at great cost, and the people are to-day undergoing hardship and discomfort.

There are bad schools and poor teachers and inefficient education authorities. There are people in positions of authority unfit or incapable of discharging that authority. There is no equalitarianism. Men and women are rewarded according to the value of their work to the community.

But above all this there is something new in the Soviet Union, a new spirit which all who have lived among the common people recognise. It is the spirit which brought thousands of young volunteers as far back as 1928, from all corners of the land to build a youth city on the Amur river; which drove the peasants in the height of the summer season to build new secondary schools for their children; or the elderly barely-literate Jewess to organise a club in an apartment house so that the children in her street should enjoy their leisure fruitfully; or the women office cleaners to hold a conference in Leningrad to raise the standard of office cleanliness; or the forty thousand youths to volunteer to restore the Donbas coal mines destroyed by the Germans; or the Asiatic peasant to volunteer to build irrigation canals. And it is that same spirit which gave the determination to set about immediately, without respite after the war, to restore the country's economy.

There is nothing miraculous about this. It is the response of the Soviet citizen to his environment, which despite its drawbacks and faults, does call forth the best that is in him; and it is achieved through education working in the Soviet society in close alliance with its planned economy and its special political system.

The rising standard of living and the economic security are visible evidence that good work and discipline are worth while. Learning and knowledge, hard work, initiative, devotion to the community, all receive speedy reward and public approbation. Ceaselessly it is pointed out to the people that without skill and knowledge they cannot have a better life, and the people have begun to see that this is true. And the first stage of this skill and knowledge is to be found in the school.

The school and the home and society are striving for the same conscious goal. The virtues that are extolled and the vices that are decried in the school are similarly extolled or decried in the home and in society. The home and society support the school. The adult newspapers, the advertisements, the cinema and literature which are read or seen by young people are found by them to be in harmony with what the school teaches. The result of the consciously directed struggle to create a new type of man for the new society which he is himself creating, can already be seen in the gradual disappearance of the predatory characteristics, and in the gradual evolution of a co-operative man who is beginning to put the good of the community before his own inclinations, a common man who is reaching out toward a profound appreciation of education and culture.

Now it is generally accepted that the discipline within the school is in some measure a reflection of the discipline in society outside the school. It is even more a reflection of social attitudes and standards of value and is subject to social sanctions. Therefore Soviet principles and practice as regards school discipline should always be related to this Soviet environment.

Over nine-tenths of the pupils of any class in any school go to school wanting to learn. They can see the purpose of education, and it is a desirable purpose. It will help to fit them for that adventurous task of building a new society. They know from their parents, from the older members of the family as well as from the press, of the vast and exciting opportunities that are calling for their abilities and their skill. To build new towns; to make the desert blossom; to conquer frozen lands for man's service; to battle against the obstacles set by nature; to discover its secrets; to create great music, art or ballet; it is a limitless horizon which calls to the young, and without the school they cannot begin to march towards it.

Thus when a teacher arrives in the classroom in the morning, out of his forty pupils one may guess that thirty-six will be on his side

and offer no resistance to learning, no discipline problem. But a few children can easily destroy the discipline of a whole class if the teacher is not equal to his task, if he does not know how to use the great support that is his, first to neutralise the opposition and then to convert it to support. This in a nutshell is the problem of discipline for the Soviet School. It is in fact a problem of the teacher, for always and everywhere the keypoint of discipline is the teacher. But the problem is not simple because the teacher has so many relationships. There is his life as an individual, as a citizen, as a member of a social group, as a member of a family, and as the trained expert at his job. All these factors enter into the art of teaching and decide the discipline in a school.

Conditions in the Soviet Union have not yet produced a body of teachers a hundred per cent perfect. To judge from the criticism in the press, indeed, there is very much room for improvement. Again, not every parent knows how to bring up children, and not all relationships are happy. Discipline in education is therefore a problem that has persisted and will persist for many a day. This is a problem not so much of the so-called naughty or undisciplined child as of the new standard of discipline demanded by the changing society at different stages of its development. Soviet educationists have perforce paid, and are paying, considerable attention to the problem. In all their research and discussions they are concerned with causes which Soviet psychologists hold are to be found either in the environment or in the child's physique. They reject Freudian interpretations of any kind.

Arising out of their experiments in the early post-revolutionary years, when their education was characterised by a complete absence of any compulsion, Soviet educationists have come to certain conclusions. One is that because of their lack of knowledge and experience of life, children are not able to judge what is best for themselves or their fellows. Nor can they at an early age take decisions or form judgments on any except the most elementary matters, because they lack the experience which gives knowledge and develops the necessary faculties for arriving at conclusions. They believe to-day that children require to live in an ordered community, whether it is the home or the school, with an accustomed pattern of living that is taken for granted, giving the security with affection which enables growth to be a continuously harmonious process. They believe that the common courtesies of life should be

observed within the school and within the classroom between pupils and between pupils and teacher.

They also believe that the child needs opportunity, that is, time and place for free creative self-expression, so that he may be aware of his own uniqueness, and rights and importance as an individual. Great provision is made for this out of school, and there is once again a movement to persuade parents to set aside, if nothing more is possible, at least a corner in the living-room which should be sacred to the children.

Further, they believe that it is essential to train children to overcome difficulties, that it is psychologically wrong to make work at school so easy that no effort is required from the child. There is a great emotional satisfaction in conquering intellectual obstacles. They believe that children must learn to do routine work and accept it as an inescapable part of life.

From all this, the reader should gather that there is nothing startlingly new about methods of discipline in Soviet Schools. There are no school psychologists or child guidance clinics. There are psychologists who contribute to the training of teachers, both in the college and the school, and to the training of parents, and there are psychotherapists available when necessary. There is child guidance, but this is given under normal school conditions by the teacher who knows, or should know, the child and who is expected to know the home.

No mental or other tests are used. In cases of serious anti-social behaviour, when the teacher's efforts have failed to effect improvement, the first step may be a very thorough medical examination by a specialist to discover a possible physical cause. The request for such examination would come from the head of the school or possibly be suggested by the school doctor. Should such a cause be absent a variety of measures are taken, if necessary at special schools, on the basis of a careful investigation either by the teacher or a member of the Parents' Committee or the head, into the child's home conditions.

Let us take an imaginary case and see how this works. Vanya has been behaving badly—he has been rude, he has disturbed the class and he has not done his homework. When the class teacher's efforts fail, the case will be discussed by the school Education Council at the teacher's or head's request and the teacher concerned will receive suggestions and help. Suppose the new attempts are no

more successful than the old. Vanya's behaviour grows worse. He is again discussed at the School Education Council, which may then decide to recommend exclusion from school for a period. This is reported to the Education Authority which investigates the case. They find the complaints against the boy genuine. They may remove the boy to a school in another district, known to be very good, or they may send him for a period to a special school whose chief feature is the prolonged day—until bedtime. Such schools are staffed by tried and experienced teachers. Here, the youngster is fully occupied every moment of the waking hours. By the evening, he is ready to go home and go to bed. Both in the classroom and in the workshop or other activity-room full demands are made on his powers. Since all his energies are so fully occupied, the occasion for being "bad" is absent, and it is found that after a period—*provided the home helps*—the youngster is ready to return to the ordinary school.

In an actual case in Leningrad the cause of bad behaviour was antipathy between the class master and the boy, who was stopped just in time from hitting his master with a heavy stone. A contributory cause was the lack of understanding and neglect by the parents, two very busy highly-educated people. The boy was not in any sense "bad" but the attitude of the teacher called out the latent aggressiveness and also permitted him to feel himself blamed for everybody's misdeeds. The education authority transferred him to a school whose head was profoundly wise, deeply understanding, and convinced that if only she could find the right approach the worst case would respond. When the mother who brought him began the tale of the boy's iniquities she cut her short very sharply, told her there was nothing wrong with her boy and that he would settle down happily, and dismissed her. She told the boy that she knew he had ability, that she expected he would behave like the other pupils and that no one, except she and he in the school, would know the reason for his transfer. She called in the boy's class teacher, introduced him, said a few words in the boy's praise and attributed his arrival in mid-term to convenience for his home. She then took the boy into the classroom, introduced him to his future classmates as a desirable addition to the class, and explained his arrival in the same way. The boy finding himself in an atmosphere of friendliness, trust and respect, knowing that in any difficulty he could go to his new friend, the Head, settled down and did exceedingly well.

In another far more serious case of anti-social behaviour the same

head succeeded through discovering and encouraging the boy's passion for pigeons. On the second day of his arrival she sent a member of the staff with the boy to buy some pigeons. The money was handed to the boy and he did the buying. That was the first in a series of psychological shock treatments. He was allowed to breed pigeons on the roof, and to invite his friends. He was a much more difficult case; the war had left its scars on him, but he too in a reasonable time responded to affection, to security, to confidence, to the challenge of his new environment.

These two cases are typical of the approach of the genuine Soviet educationist to the problem of the undisciplined child. There is a reiterated emphasis on the need for knowledge and understanding of the individual child. Without this knowledge and understanding Soviet educationists insist that there can be no good discipline.

For delinquents and young offenders there are residential schools known as Labour Schools or Communes. These are described in detail in Chapter Thirteen.

To return to the school, much of what follows in this chapter and elsewhere has its parallel in many schools in other parts of the world, but in order to give an overall impression it must be described here. There is a fixed time-table to set the ordered atmosphere of the school, though it is never so rigid that it cannot be relaxed on a special occasion. A bell rings to announce the beginning of school, and the end of lessons. A class has to rise on the entrance of the teacher and give greeting, and must do the same on the teacher's departure. Pupils are not expected to talk or interrupt when the teacher is giving a lesson; hands are raised to ask or answer a question. Homework is set and is expected to be done.

In the primary school, monitors and prefects are appointed by the teacher for short periods and the duties are many and varied, so that as many pupils as possible have their share in class responsibilities. In the Junior and Senior Secondary School, eleven to fourteen years and fourteen to seventeen years respectively, the class elects its monitors and prefects. Each class in these age groups has a mistress or a master who is responsible for the class, its behaviour and general attainment. This is a serious responsibility, and carries with it payment additional to the ordinary salary. In both these age groups there is a class committee elected by pupils, with participation by the responsible form-master or mistress. The committee elects its own officers. Over all there is a school pupils' committee, on which the

head has a seat, consisting of the elected representatives of the classes. These committees, particularly those of the senior classes, take on much responsibility for the general order of the school: good behaviour, good work, the cleanliness and tidiness of the building and attractive look of the school. Their responsibilities will include helping the slower with school work, home visits to find out the cause of difficult behaviour, setting in motion or even providing practical help in cases of need.

In addition to pupils' class committees, there are parents' class committees. On one of my last visits I attended a meeting of a Class X parents' committee. There were present, in addition to the parents, the form master and a representative from the factory with which the school was linked. The question for discussion was how to make their seventeen-year-old sons and daughters (co-education was then in existence) do better work. It was regarded as the joint responsibility of the home and school.

Another aid to good discipline and good work—the two are considered inseparable—is the Wall Newspaper for class and school. It is a large sheet put up on the wall, whose contents include literary and artistic material and short reports of local and national interest provided by the children. On this sheet may also go a reprimand, often skilfully illustrated, for bad work or “bad” behaviour, this for all to read and see. On the school wall newspaper, which hangs in the hall, a whole class may find itself mentioned as rewarded or punished.

Both reward and punishment are used, but it is always emphasised that if the school is run well, if the lessons are well prepared—that is well thought out and well planned—and if the teacher has succeeded in obtaining the co-operation of the pupils in the task of education, the discipline will be good and there will be no need to seek ways and means of dealing with bad discipline.

Rewards vary from prizes such as watches and books, special holidays and visits to theatres, to commendation before the whole school or class. Punishments include reprimands such as standing in front of the class, being sent out of the class, being deprived of a privilege. The same punishments meted out by the Head, in cases where the teacher feels himself ineffective, are much more serious. And as already stated, in grave cases exclusion from school may be resorted to. No corporal punishment in any form is allowed. It is an offence for which a teacher would be prosecuted.

On all occasions, in all educational literature, it is emphasised

that the virtue of rewards and punishments lies not only in their immediacy and in their logic, but in their sparing use, that it is the poor teacher who has to rely on such extraneous aids to discipline.

A set of rules for school behaviour was elaborated in 1943.¹ The demands on the children are very similar to those made in good schools in any country. The rules are printed on a card which the pupil is always supposed to have with him and which he is supposed to regard rather as one might a membership card with rules of a highly honoured institution. From time to time, teachers are expected to have a talk about these rules, their significance and implication.

In 1946, school record books were introduced into its schools by the City of Moscow Education Authority. These books are designed to be a record for the year of the pupils' behaviour, work and general development. Each is prefaced by a list of duties for the pupil, which are:

- (1) To keep his record book clean and tidy and not to hand it over to any unauthorised person.
- (2) To have the book with him at school and to present it when requested to the teacher, Head or any other person connected with the school.
- (3) Every Saturday the book must be shown to his parents who will duly sign it as having been read, after which the book must be handed to the responsible class teacher.

There is a page for every month of the school year. On this are listed the subjects being taken with space for marks for each. There is a space for conduct, one for diligence and one for attendance and punctuality. Each subject has four columns, one for each week in the month. There are additional pages for special remarks and comments. The last page is reserved for the whole year's report by the School Education Council.

TEACHING METHODS

The methods employed in Soviet Schools are what may be termed ordinary, but, as is well known, in the hands of a gifted teacher the most ordinary methods become unique, while in the hands of a poor teacher the most extraordinary or rare method will be a failure.

The basic method of teaching is the class lesson given by the teacher, which does not mean that the children sit passive the whole

¹ Appendix 1, pp. 172-174.

time. With the younger children, for example the seven year olds in Class I, the actual time taken up by the teacher in talking is recommended by Professor Kornilov, the eminent psychologist, to last no more than fifteen minutes. That is the maximum period he considers possible for a child's uninterrupted mental concentration. The lesson which actually lasts forty-five minutes must therefore be broken up into varied activity. A reading lesson should have no more than fifteen minutes' reading, and should then be varied by story-telling, by discussion of the material read (the children to do the talking), by drawing or modelling or other handwork to illustrate what has been read. An arithmetic lesson for Classes I to IV will have all possible aids, chiefly home-made, for translating the mental process into action and producing a real visual image. According to the teacher there will be more or less activity.

As the pupils proceed from Class IV upward there is less physical activity and more intellectual activity during the lesson. For these children the class lesson by the teacher is supplemented by individual work both at home and in study rooms. Much more talking is done by Soviet children than by British children. For example, when knowledge is tested, it is not limited to a question which requires a brief answer. The pupil will come out in front of the class and give a reply that may take five minutes or more, illustrating on the black-board if necessary, and using maps, globe or diagram, or science apparatus when appropriate.

Since the return to the lesson by the teacher as the basic method, considerable research has been carried on into what constitutes a successful lesson, that is, "one in which children acquire new knowledge, enlarge their understanding and strengthen (even if to a very small degree) the capacity for reasoning and logical thinking";¹ that is, a lesson in which though not physically active, the pupils are intellectually active. To achieve this, and no lesson is considered good which does not in some measure fulfil these conditions, attention is directed to the preparation of the lesson, its content, construction, the sequence of important points in the content, its presentation as well as to the teacher's use of language. The Instruction Supervisor in the Junior and Senior Secondary School is expected to help with the preparation of lessons, while in the primary school the older teachers within the school, and the regular discussions at the Education Bureau aid the teacher.

¹ Kairov.

Every possible aid to teaching is used. Research institutes carry on investigation and experiment into the best type of visual aids and the best apparatus for the sciences. Within the school itself, teachers are encouraged to be inventive and original in evolving new aids and techniques.

Like all industry, the manufacture of school equipment, apparatus, and other didactic material is a state undertaking. Whatever the educationists have agreed upon as desirable—this generally follows a recommendation of a teachers' conference—is, after approval by the Ministry, put into production at reasonable prices. In addition to this, in the school amateur construction circles, in the physics and mathematical circles, excellent apparatus is often produced.

Educational visits and excursions are a recognised teaching aid and have their place in the time-table for the term. For Nature Study there must be at least three excursions a term into the country.

While the project method is not used anywhere, subjects are correlated, this being aided by co-operation between the appropriate teachers, and all subjects are closely related to the pupils' life.

Reading is the core of the curriculum for the first three classes and from it radiate many varied activities. "The pupils must know not only the words describing things, but the things themselves and the connections existing between them in actual life . . . The reading therefore has to be supplemented for each subject that it deals with, by excursions, experiments, and demonstrations, by comparisons of facts and by the making of deductions. This will help to ensure training in observation and thought, and prevent the mechanical acquisition of facts."¹

Geography begins with a study of the district in which the school is located, and as it develops in succeeding years, is linked up with the economic development of the country. It includes the geography of other countries and such practical activity as surveying, model and map making.

History begins in the primary school simply as stories of their people² and develops into world history both ancient and modern as the pupil goes up the school. Pupils are expected to see the connection between historical events and contemporary events. Charts, diagrams, pictorial matter, excursions, and plays and films provided both professionally and by the pupils' amateur clubs, aid in the

¹ Introduction to reading syllabus for Primary Schools.

² Remember the different nationalities.

teaching of this subject. Plays are not used as an aid in the classroom. They are attended either in the amateur clubs or professional theatre out of school.

The approach to other subjects is similar. The sciences have well-equipped modern laboratories with some exceedingly ingenious apparatus. As far as I am aware, a school broadcasting service, such as exists in Britain, is not used in the Soviet Union. Broadcasts for children are used, but they have a more general cultural aim, to enlarge the horizon.

Music, literature and poetry-readings are broadcast, but after school hours, except for the kindergarten. The film, however, is very widely used as a teaching technique. A great many Senior Secondary Schools have special rooms, equipped for teaching with films and used only for that purpose. In other schools, a room may serve other purposes too, but it is unusual to find a Junior or a Senior Secondary School built before 1940 which is not equipped for the showing of films. Educational films, produced in collaboration with the subject specialists, have their part in the general film production plans. In addition to films, various types of projection, such as the alascopes, epidiascopes, the ordinary magic lantern, etc., are to be found in all Junior and Senior Secondary Schools and in an ever-increasing number of the Primary Schools.

This may all sound very formal. How is it then that Soviet education is succeeding in its task? I must remind the reader of the Soviet environment which produces a willingness and a desire to learn in the majority of the school children. Intellectual activity is as satisfying as physical activity and as essential. Given a good teacher, an apparently formal lesson can be exciting because the class is intellectually active, that is, it is learning, apprehending, deducing, applying the knowledge to new situations, in a word, discovering the intellectual world. And for the physical activity, the doing of things, for the freedom to move about, the freedom to be occupied in the same task for a long period, for this there is ample out-of-school provision.

EXAMINATIONS

There are of course no examinations in the kindergartens, the transfer from group to group depending on the teacher's report. There are also no end-of-year examinations in the first three classes of the primary school. Term tests are given in order to check upon

progress, and transfer is on the child's record for the year. At the end of Class IV there is the transfer examination set on the work for the whole of the preceding four years.

For the transfer examination for each of the three age-groups¹ (Primary, Junior and Senior Secondary) the Department of Education for Primary and Senior Secondary Schools of the R.S.F.S.R., issues examination cards. On each card—for each subject examined—are three themes and the complete series of cards is designed to cover the full syllabus of work for the transfer year and the main themes of the preceding years. For example, in a geography examination on the year's work on the U.S.S.R., three headings on a card might be—the wheat belt, the waterways, the Pamirs. The actual questions under the headings are set by the teacher in agreement with the examination commission.

For the Primary grade transfer examination they are designed to test “the accuracy of knowledge, the degree of intelligent understanding of the syllabuses covered, and the ability to apply the knowledge in practice”.²

For the matriculation diploma, at the end of the Ten-Year School, the examination cards are designed to test “the accuracy of the pupil's knowledge, his development, independence of judgment, and ability to relate knowledge to life and theory to practice”.²

As soon as the cards are received by the school, they must be made known to the subject teacher and to the pupils to enable revision to be taken. Ten days before the examination the teachers must copy the themes or headings on pieces of paper or cards, complete each heading with relevant detailed questions, fill in anything that may be necessary to complete a question partly set, and set any problems required by the theme. The teacher must further prepare all the oral questions on the theme. Thus, while headings under which questions are set are the same for all the schools, the actual questions will vary with the different teachers. Again, while the children know what the whole class will be examined on, individually they do not know which card they will receive, nor what the actual question will be, because the card to be received on the examination day is not handed out until that day.

In the first transfer examination (Class IV) written and oral work is required in Russian and Arithmetic, oral only in History and

¹ Seven–eleven, eleven–fourteen, fourteen–seventeen.

² From handbook on examinations.

Geography. In the second transfer examination (Class VII), written work is required in Russian and Mathematics, and oral in all subjects examined.

In the matriculation examination (Class X) written work is required in Foreign Languages, Russian Language and Literature, History and Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry, while oral work is required in all subjects. The use of globes, maps and blackboard for illustration—with a duster for rubbing out mistakes—and a dictionary in the foreign language examination are all permitted.

Every examination card for the Class IV, the first transfer examination in Russian, contains a question in sentence analysis and in grammar. Every pupil is required to relate in his own words something read in school, and to recite a poem or fable. Reading—unseen—is examined and is marked for comprehension, accuracy, speed and expression. In arithmetic three questions have to be answered, one involving enumeration above ten, or sums, the second covering the arithmetic book used, and the third is a mental arithmetic problem. In the arithmetic examination the pupil is required not only to give the correct answer but to show the method by which he arrived at it. The history cards, too, have three questions. The answer to the first must be in detailed narrative form. The object of the second and third questions is to test knowledge of individual facts and of chronology. In geography the examination cards are so designed as to test a knowledge of maps, elementary geographical notions and facts, a knowledge of the compass and topographical maps.

The examining body for Class IV consists of the School Head, the class teacher, two other teachers, and a representative of the Regional Education Authority. For Class VII and the matriculation diploma examination (seventeen–eighteen years) the examining body is similarly composed, except that the Education Representative in an autonomous republic will be from the Ministry itself; the teacher is the subject teacher, and the two assistants are those taking the same subject or related subjects in senior forms. In this examination, each member of the examining body must have graduated from a university. Should any teacher not be so qualified he or she must be replaced by one with a university education from another school. In the case of the Head not having such an education, he or she is replaced by a member of the Education Authority.

There is a very careful approach to examinations. Every effort



Learning to walk at the Leningrad Institute of Pediatrics



Yekaterina Firsova reads the answer of her pupil, Mira, to an examination question on the Napoleonic Wars

is made to create a calm yet responsible atmosphere. For oral examinations the class is divided into two, and those not being examined are encouraged to spend the time in music, games or other such activities. My own experience of some of these examinations was impressive. At a physics examination a seventeen-year-old had put up his apparatus on the desk and then proceeded to solve the problem theoretically on the blackboard. He worked easily, with confidence. When he had finished, the examiner asked, "Can you solve this problem in another way?", whereupon after a moment's thought he proceeded to do so. The boy was followed by a girl who was obviously nervous. At once the atmosphere among the examiners changed. One could feel it relaxing and becoming warmer. In a gentle, encouraging voice the examiner put his question. Now and then, when the girl hesitated, he helped by a word. Such help is permitted but it is taken into consideration in marking when it is anything more than a slight jog to memory or encouragement to the nervous.

The Scientific Research Institute for Schools carried out a serious piece of research in 1939 on university entrance examinations, which in fact are a test of the work in the last three years of the Senior Secondary School. Many of the instructions since issued on the technique of examinations are based on the results of this research. Much of this dealt with oral examinations which play so large a part. The report noted the importance of establishing a friendly atmosphere between examiner and examinee, the importance of the phrasing of a question, of the tone of voice used, and the importance of revision skilfully planned. It was an exceedingly critical report almost brutally frank in its strictures.

Since that was published in 1940, the improvement has been considerable, but observation of examinations and the collection of material on the subject continues. Soviet educationists consider both tests and examinations educationally important and, in fact, necessary. They are therefore concerned to discover the essential conditions for making examinations a genuine test of progress.

Marking is on a numerical scale to-day, the marks ranging from one to five. Those who pass the second transfer examination from Class VII receive a certificate which entitles them to proceed to the next educational stage, either into Class VIII or into technical schools, some of which may require in addition a special entrance examination.

Pupils who matriculate from Class X with five marks in each of the subjects examined, and receive five from the subject teacher for the other subjects and for conduct, are awarded a gold medal; those who gain five for each subject in the examination and four in the others are awarded a silver medal. Gold medallists are exempt from entrance examinations for the university. Silver medallists have to take the examination and on passing are given priority over other applicants. Both receive free university education and scholarships in addition.

Soviet educationists are much concerned to find a system of marking and methods of assessing attainment which shall be uniform and shall not be liable to the vagaries and prejudices of the examiner. Research and experiment have been carried on and Soviet educationists believe they are on the way to solving the problem.

While examinations are held to be necessary as a means of testing the pupil's fitness for passing on to the next class or the next stage, it is repeatedly emphasised that both the Head and the teachers must be fully cognisant of the regular progress of the pupils so as to discover in good time where extra help is needed. Examinations in no way relieve the teacher of the responsibility for the day-to-day knowledge of the pupils' progress or lack of it. Great emphasis is laid on the teacher's record of the pupils' work and behaviour throughout the year.

As we have seen, no form of intelligence testing is used, either for transfer or for selection for different types of education. The knowledge of the child essential to complement the examination has to be supplied by the subject teacher and responsible class teacher together.

Here are some specimen examination cards of questions set for the Matriculation examination:

Literature

- Card No. 6—(1) The significance of Chekhov's works.
 (2) Griboyedov's comedy "Woe from Wit", a description of three characters.
 (3) A passage for grammatical analysis.

- Card No. 24—(1) Shakespeare's "Hamlet"—Hamlet's character.
 (2) The terms epic, lyric, drama.
 (3) A sentence for analysis.

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- Card No. 25—(1) Goethe's "Faust." The philosophy and its expression in the person of Faust.
- (2) Griboyedov's Comedy "Woe from Wit". The character of Chatsky. The significance of the comedy.
- (3) A sentence for grammatical analysis.

Chemistry

- Card No. 1—(1) The chemical element as considered from the atomic-molecular and electronic theory. Oxygen as an element and its allotropic transformation.
- (2) Cellulose—Nitrocellulose—Artificial Silk.
- (3) Problems.
- Card No. 9—(1) Phosphorous and its compounds.
- (2) The theory of the structure of organic compounds.
- (3) Problems.
- Card No. 15—(1) The structure of the atom: the atomic nucleus and its charge: the number of electrons. Valence.
- (2) Fluids and their transformation.
- (3) Problems.

Chapter Four

PRE-SCHOOL

BIRTH TO THREE-FOUR YEARS

THIS age group is under the care of the Ministry of Health, but since education is as important as health at this stage, and since the establishments catering for this group are in the best sense of the word educational, it is proper for us to consider it here.

The feature that strikes one in pre-school provision is the conscious and scientific recognition of the physiological basis of growth and the consequent constant medical guidance received by all workers in the nursery and kindergarten. The educational and psychological approach and the equipment provided are very similar to those found in the best institutions in Western Europe and America, and some of the techniques in the kindergarten stage have been adopted from nursery school procedure in England.

Repeated decrees by the Council of People's Commissariats, now Council of Ministries, have established the responsibility of the factory, enterprise, administrative organisation, collective farm, etc., for the provision of nursery (crèche) accommodation for the children of their workers. The war made this provision more urgent. Nearly all Soviet women worked outside the home in one capacity or another; measures, therefore, had to be taken to ensure the well-being of the children. The care of the child in the absence of the mother at work is the primary reason for the existence of nurseries. The other reason is a psychological-educational one, which requires more space for discussion than can be given here. Suffice it to say that for many years to come, if not permanently, a nursery or crèche will offer facilities and conditions for physical, emotional, mental and moral development, which, by its very nature, a home cannot offer to the same degree. That does not mean that a country can afford to ignore the home in the upbringing of the child under three, or, indeed, at any age. But until such time as every potential mother has been

trained in the art of bringing up children, and every home provides the necessary facilities, and until such time as economic necessity whether individual or national no longer demands that women work when the child is very young, children's nurseries are an essential service, one might say a service of great urgency. When all the desirable conditions obtain it may still be found that a nursery for some hours a day is a powerful educative force.

It is open to any body of people to set up a nursery. Thus, it is not uncommon for the housing committee of a block of flats to run a nursery for its tenants. New blocks often have provision for the special accommodation required. The nurseries are financed by the factory or other body out of their funds, though ultimately financial responsibility rests with the Ministry to which the factory belongs. Parents pay for the food, the amount varying with income and number of children. Families of four children or more pay nothing.

In the rural districts up to 1941 it was usual to have seasonal nurseries, either stationary or travelling, which took charge of the children during the summer months, when the mother was working in the fields. In the winter, the child would be at home with its mother. Since the war, and because of the war, a far greater number of women are working on the collective farm all the year round. To free these women from anxiety for their children during their daily absence from home, and to give these country babies the same care and attention as town babies receive, the number of permanent places in rural nurseries was increased in 1945 (by a decree in November 1944) to three hundred and eighty-six thousand. The cost of rural nurseries is borne by the collective farm.

Nurseries in urban areas have on an average, forty-sixty children, although there are some with as many as ninety. A very large industrial enterprise may have as many as four nurseries. For the convenience of nursing mothers, all are located as near as possible to the place of work as is consistent with health.

The staff varies, but for an average nursery it will consist of a Head, who is specially trained, a doctor, one or two medical nurses, a nursery nurse in charge of each group, and one or two nursery teachers for the educational work. In addition, there are the domestic staff, bursar, cook and maids, and, often, a handyman.

The nurseries are open for as long as the mothers work. There are nurseries which keep the children until quite late in cases where the mother works in the day and studies in the evening. There are

also weekly residential nurseries for mothers who are on night-shifts, a particular war-time measure. The domestic staff is on duty eight hours a day, teachers six hours a day. Medical inspection by the nurse of throat, skin and temperature in a special reception cubicle takes place every morning.

Accommodation varies, from the indifferent to the very lavish. It depends almost entirely on local interest and initiative. Every age group (the maximum number in a group is fifteen but it rarely reaches this) has its own room, and frequently its own special veranda for mid-day sleep.

The equipment is designed to train the senses and the physique, and particularly a sense of beauty and rhythm. There are special educational toys as well as the usual children's toys. The furniture is generally exceedingly well made, and such things as chests of drawers are designed so that the two-year-old may open and shut them easily.

Habit training begins at a very early stage, at about eighteen months. By the early use of toys which one child cannot handle alone (e.g., large light building units) good-neighbourliness is encouraged. From four months onwards physical exercises for the children, designed and graded by the doctor, are carried out by nurses in order to aid growth and strengthen physique, the premise being that Nature can be aided at a very early stage.

As is the case in all educational establishments, there are regular staff meetings attended also by the domestic staff, by which means a common approach to the child is ensured on the part of all those who come into contact with him. The nurseries are, in addition, centres of parent training. Consultations with parents, either individually or in groups, are a regular feature of these places.

Continuity in the child's life is obtained in a very happy way. Those children who are ready to pass from the nursery into the kindergarten take their teachers with them into the new environment for two or three days or even for a week. And quite often the kindergarten teacher proper will have met her future charges in their homes before the term begins.

THE KINDERGARTEN

Like the nurseries, kindergartens have to be provided by the industrial, economic, administrative or agricultural organisations where the mother works. Elsewhere the Ministry of Education bears

the responsibility. The building and equipment are provided by these bodies. Here, too, parents make some financial contribution to the cost of maintenance. The family income is divided by the total number of members of the family and the maximum fee, rarely required, is equal to forty per cent of the average sum for one person. Families with more than four children, unmarried mothers, and those in receipt of disablement pensions, or war invalids, are all exempt from any payment.

The local education authority appoints the Head, and approves the latter's appointments of her staff. Health is still important, but the kindergartens are definitely places of education. Preparation for living at this stage is held to be more important than formal instruction.

With a natural wisdom which understands that the best provision must be made in the early formative years, the accommodation is generous here too. A typically good kindergarten will have a play-class-room for each group, open-air verandas for the mid-day sleep, one or two dining-rooms, a hall and any special room the Head may plan, in addition to domestic offices, cloakrooms, etc. For the junior groups there is equipment for training of the motor senses, and educational apparatus of a very great variety. Decoration, to which local talent often contributes, is attractive. In a well-designed nursery infant school there will be beautiful rugs on the floor for the children, gaily painted furniture, and soft pastel shades on walls and ceiling. A love of nature is inculcated early, and an aquarium and herbarium and often a hedgehog or guinea pig as well, make up the nature corner of each room. In recent years gardens have been introduced as part of the playground facilities. Normally, all the staff in a kindergarten is qualified. During the war and for some time after, teachers with short term training have been accepted. Owing to the war too, many kindergartens will for a time be cramped for space.

The staff, in addition to the Head, includes one teacher for every twenty-five children—that is the peace-time minimum in a class for infants—a doctor and nurse, a nursery helper for each group and a special teacher for music and eurythmics. There is also the usual domestic staff of bursar, cook, book-keeper and cleaners.

Both in nurseries and kindergartens the daily régime and the feeding are planned in consultation with the doctor, whose decision is final. Doctors for children are specially trained in institutes or departments of pediatrics (child medicine), in a course which includes

child psychology. The Central Institute of Pediatrics has a department for Education and Child Development. It is from here that most of the guidance in the organisation of nurseries and kindergartens emanates. It is a successful method of co-operation between health and education. The daily pattern of kindergarten life consists of alternating periods of group activities, rest and free play. The length of time for organised group activity conducted by the group teacher, for out-of-door activity and for sleep is, as stated before, fixed by the doctor.

The arts, music and dancing particularly, play an important part. Much attention is paid to speech development and enrichment of vocabulary. Here children's authors and poets help by visiting the kindergartens and telling their stories or reciting their poems. Russian authors and poets appear to have considerable gifts of declamation. Some part of the out-of-door activity is deliberately planned by the teacher for the acquisition of new impressions and experience. On return the teacher will arrange for small groups of four or five children to describe and discuss the impressions received.

The large rooms and adequate equipment allow for the grouping of children into very small units so that it is possible to give them almost individual attention. While one group is thus engaged with the teacher, others will be engaged in free play in different parts of the room. Formal education, that is direct teaching of the three R's, now begins at seven years. The play material, however, offers scope for the first efforts in reading, writing and numbers.

In the kindergarten, as in the nursery, there is discussion between the teaching and the domestic staff on the training of children to ensure a common approach. Character and habit training receive continuous attention in the kindergarten in the Soviet Union as elsewhere. Independence is encouraged by all methods which make a child able to do things for himself and desirous of doing so. Responsibility, in harmony with their stage of development, is given early. One may see three and four-year-olds gravely discharging such momentous duties as waiting at table, acting as monitors for cloakrooms and for nature corners, and so on.

By the aid of well planned activities and special toys, children are trained to live co-operatively as well as individually. Soviet educationists consider it essential that an atmosphere of affection shall pervade both crèche and kindergarten. For many hours of the day

the teacher has to replace the mother. She must give the child the same feeling of individuality as he would have in his home with his mother. Many behaviour problems arise in the kindergarten, particularly in the first year of attendance. Only by a patient, affectionate, individual approach will the teacher learn how to deal with the problem. The knowledge of home conditions, and often of child-parent relationships, which the kindergarten teacher is expected to have aids considerably in dealing with these youngsters.

In 1943 the Department of Pre-School Education of the then Commissariat of Education issued what in England would be called suggestions to kindergarten teachers—the literal translation is "Methods Letter". "It is desirable," it says, "to arrange for the admission of new children to be gradual—over a period of three to five days. In this way it will be possible for the teacher to give each child individual attention . . . The new child should meet with an affectionate warm reception, should feel at once that he was being expected, and that the kindergarten is a happy, interesting place." Further it says, "It is essential that the child shall feel the joy of play, activity, and outdoor games in common." Separating children off into little islands, each with his toys, in order to avoid trouble, is not to teach children to be neighbourly. ". . . The small child who is used to being addressed individually when at home does not always understand when he is addressed collectively in a group. Therefore it is necessary now and then to address a child individually, after the group has been given a collective order. . . . Individual child play and an individual relation of teacher and child must play a leading rôle in the life of the youngest children."

At regular education staff meetings problems of the kindergarten in general and of individual children are discussed. In some of the kindergartens research is carried on in methods of dealing with difficult children. Results are immediately available to the whole body of kindergarten teachers.

The kindergartens too are centres of parental education, which is a further help in dealing with behaviour problems. Like the crèches they are open for the convenience of mothers, so that the length of the day varies with the mothers' hours of work. Where the need arises, weekly residential groups are arranged. The teachers work six-hour shifts.

By the end of 1943 there were thirty thousand kindergartens accommodating over one million three hundred and forty thousand

children. The Germans destroyed a great many, but a great many have since been rebuilt, and, judging from the 1945 budget of two thousand and forty-five million roubles spent on kindergartens—six hundred million more than in 1944—the number to-day must considerably exceed that of 1943.

In addition to these permanent kindergartens there are the summer open-air kindergartens which serve nearly two million children.

City kindergartens, like city nurseries for the toddlers, move into the country for the three hottest months of the summer—June, July and August—where most of the time is spent in the open air and the opportunity is taken to introduce these city children to nature in its varied forms.

THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

There are special training schools for the kindergarten teacher. In 1945 a revised curriculum and new syllabuses were issued for the schools training teachers for pre-school institutions. The curriculum for the three-year¹ course includes Pedagogics (education), the History of Education, Psychology, Hygiene, Children's Literature, Methods of Speech Development (with practice in reading and story telling), Methods for Nature Study, Art, Modelling and other work with materials, Music, Singing and Rhythmics (with methods), Games (physical), Physical exercises, School Practice.

Pedagogy begins in the second half of the first year and is continued to the end of the course. In that period students are expected "to acquire a detailed knowledge of the content and methods of pre-school education² and to learn how to apply their knowledge in practice."

"From the very beginning pedagogy must be linked up with practice in the nursery-infant school. In studying general methods and practice of pre-school education the students must learn how to apply them in individual cases according to conditions as they exist in practice."³

The course for Pedagogy is divided into sixteen themes, each with its allotted number of hours, totalling one hundred and seventy-two.

A comparison of the time allotted to the different themes brings

¹ Extended to four years—1947

² Here used in the sense of upbringing and instruction.

³ Programi Doshkoylnikh Pedagogichiskikh Oochilishch—Oochpedgiz, 1946.

out the importance of play—twenty-eight hours, and the importance of bringing the family and the kindergarten together—twelve hours. The History of Education begins with *Upbringing and Instruction in Slave Society and in the Middle Ages* and as it develops it takes in all the world's educationists, including Comenius, John Locke, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Fourier, Robert Owen, and finally covers present day Soviet theory and practice in kindergarten and school. Montessori has four hours given up to her out of a very concentrated course of ninety-nine hours.

Psychology is given fifty-four hours and has as its tasks "to give students a knowledge of the basic facts of general psychology, to create the necessary psychological background for the study of general pedagogy, the theory of pre-school education and methods; to provide the future kindergarten teacher with a knowledge and comprehension of the most important facts in the field of psychology of the pre-school age and of educational psychology.

"It is essential to avoid abstract theorising and dry exposition of material and generalisations behind which the student finds no definite content. Psychology must give the future teacher an understanding of human life, and with it the valuable practical knowledge relating to the psychology of the pre-school child."

Art and Handwork are taken throughout the three years and have two hundred and eighty-two hours allocated to them, of which fifty hours are given to theory and the rest to practice. Theory includes the study of Russian and foreign artists. Practice includes drawing, modelling, appliqué work, making toys and educational aids from the varied materials locally available, and also shadow theatre and puppetry, sewing and embroidery, painting and sculpture.

Music, taken over the whole course, has an allocation of two hundred and seventy-nine hours. It includes choral work, rhythmic, giving knowledge of the work of composers, music reading, methods of music training in the kindergarten and playing a musical instrument (piano or national instrument). Every student receives at least one twenty-minute music lesson a week and must practice at least thirty minutes daily. To supplement the teaching of music, instrumental, vocal and dance circles are organised which provide lecture-concerts, musical evenings, and evenings for students' amateur performances. An essential part of the training is the class visit to the opera and concerts, and class listening to musical programmes on the radio.

Space does not permit a detailed description of all the subjects taken in the course. Only those considered of particular interest have been touched on.

The tasks of school practice are "to deepen and strengthen the theoretical knowledge, to train the student in observation and analysis of the work with children; to prepare the student for her work, to strengthen the student's love for children and respect for the teaching profession."¹

School practice takes place in the second half of the first year and continues throughout the course. It consists of observation throughout the course, trial lessons, one day's practice, and three weeks' uninterrupted teaching practice.

THE SYLLABUS FOR THE PEDAGOGY COURSE

What Pedagogy Teaches	2 hours.
Purpose and Tasks of Communist Education	4 "
The U.S.S.R. System of Education	2 "
Pre-School Education, its development and significance	3 "
Education in the Crèche	3 "
Tasks, Content and Principles of Pre-School Education	10 "
The Kindergarten Teacher	4 "
Physical Training	6 "
Play	28 "
Occupations in the Kindergarten	6 "
Training for Friendliness in the Kindergarten	3 "
Training a Sense of Order	6 "
Character Training	4 "
Training Habits of Work	4 "
Nature and Surroundings Study	6 "
Native Language	4 "
Development of Primary Mathematical Conceptions	10 "
Aesthetic Training	4 "
Festivals and Entertainments	5 "
Planning and Records	12 "

¹ *Ibid.*

A GUIDE TO SOVIET EDUCATION

The Kindergarten and the Family	12 hours.
The Organisation and Administration of the Kindergarten	14 „
Basic Principles and Content of Work in the Primary School	8 „
The Kindergarten and the School	4 „
Pre-examination Revision	6 „

Chapter Five

GENERAL EDUCATION

BUILDINGS

THE School Buildings are exceedingly varied. They range from the large one-room village school of pre-revolution days to the very fine three-storeyed modern buildings with a look of great dignity and purpose. Because the problem of accommodation has been urgent ever since the revolution, building could never keep pace with demand, and time and labour were economised on finish and details. The very pleasant extraneous amenities, not always essential to education, of the best senior or secondary school building put up in England just before the war are absent from Soviet schools. On the other hand, as far as I am aware, there were no condemned buildings in use as schools up to 1941.¹ A country school of the smallest type—one class-room—was generally spacious, fresh, clean and attractive, if not always well equipped. The school may even be a tent as is the case with the still existing nomads who move with their flocks in the spring, but it will be hygienic and as attractive a conditions permit.

In the period when a great drive was made to have universal junior secondary education and a sufficient supply of senior secondary schools in all cities, rural centres, and industrial settlements, schools were built without assembly halls, a condition which was tolerated but not welcomed by the staffs. Normally schools will have in addition to class-rooms, cloak-rooms and offices, an assembly hall and a dining-room, for each educational stage, in the case of the secondary schools. In the latter there is always a spacious well-filled library which may number several thousands of volumes. In a primary school the library may consist only of a number of

¹ The war naturally changed this situation. Immediately after the liberation, dug-outs, lean-tos, anything, was used as a school until proper accommodation could be restored.

shelves. On each floor of the Seven and Ten-Year School it is customary to have wide corridors which are used in inclement weather for recreation during breaks. They are also used as exhibition space by history, geography or other teachers. There is a room for the Head and one for the staff, and sometimes an additional room with education material either made by the staff, or newly acquired by the school. Here, discussions in methods are held by the staff. Quite often there is a specially equipped room for films. Excellently equipped laboratories for the sciences are found in all modern, and in many old buildings. Gymnasiums have been increasing in number. Subject rooms are appearing in some schools but there are no special art rooms or music rooms in the general school. All schools are equipped for wireless. A Pioneers'¹ room, that is, a large club room that serves as the headquarters of the school Pioneer organisation, is to be found in every secondary school.

Repairs and redecorations are carried out yearly before the new autumn term begins. During and since the war, owing to the acute shortage of labour, this has in a large measure been carried out by parents. Russians consider it shocking to allow children to return to a dirty school. Peeling paint would certainly arouse the wrath of someone concerned with the school. They are very fond of putting up curtains to the class-room windows and when flowers are out of season there are always plants. The curtains are quite often made and embroidered or stencilled by the mothers. More and more schools are once again having workshops for woodwork, metalwork, cobbling and similar manual activities. School playgrounds are being enlarged and, wherever possible, plots of ground are used for nature work. Rural schools must by decree have a considerable plot of land for practical work.

THE STAFF

There are rural schools—comparatively few to-day—still so small that one teacher takes all the four classes of the primary stage. This applies to all those schools where the numbers are under thirty. The teacher works six hours a day instead of the normal four hours, and is paid accordingly. The instructions dealing with staffing state that “the best teachers must be selected for such schools.” There are more rural schools which are staffed by two teachers, one of whom has responsibility for the school. In these schools one teacher takes

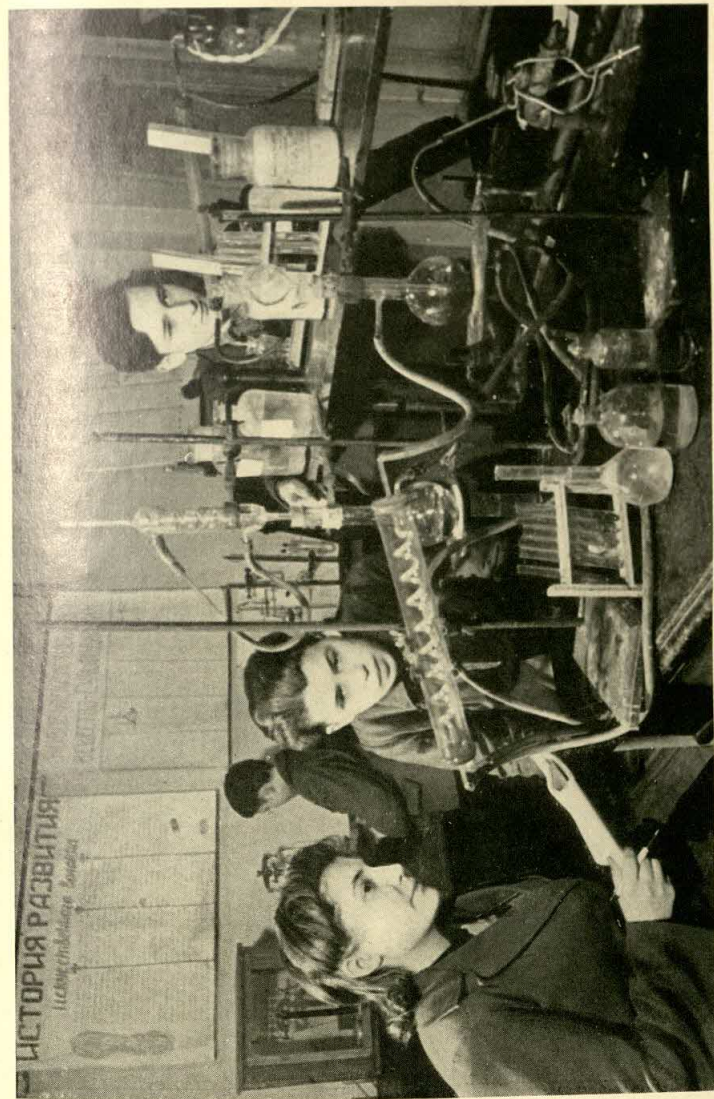
¹ The youth organisation for ages ten to sixteen.

Classes I and III and the other II and IV, going up with them, so that the following year the order is reversed. Next in size are the rural schools with four teachers, but with numbers not sufficient to warrant a Head. In such cases one of the staff is given a Head's responsibility for which too there is additional pay. The full-complement primary school has a Head and four teachers. In the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools, in addition to the Head and subject teachers, there is an instruction supervisor who teaches part of the time. The really important work of this member of the staff is concerned with raising the standard of teaching and of work by the children. Often the instruction supervisor will carry on experiments within the school in the teaching of some subject. During the shortage of specialised teachers, some of these supervisors may be attached to two or more schools for their particular subject. The secondary schools have, in addition to the teaching staff, a secretary, book-keeper, cook and other kitchen staff, and a business manager concerned with the economics of school administration. There are forty pupils in a class and this obtains throughout the whole of the secondary school, with the exception of Class X where thirty-five is the maximum number. In this class there may be twenty-five in the smaller secondary schools. It is agreed that forty is not an ideal number but it is considered preferable to have forty than to deny children secondary education. The first education decrees after the Soviets came to power laid down twenty-five as the maximum number for any class. That could only have been put into practice at the cost of a considerable delay in achieving universal compulsory education up to fifteen years, and was therefore waived for the time being.

There is a School Staff Committee (School Pedagogic Council) which includes the whole staff and meets regularly. This is the body whose approval must be obtained before a recommendation for temporary exclusion from school can be put before the Local Education Authority. It likewise makes recommendations for awards to pupils and awards and State recognition for good services to members of its staff. In addition to the School Pedagogic Council, covering everybody, there are subject committees consisting of teachers of the same or related subjects.

RÉGIME

The school has a six-day week and the number of hours worked



Young chemists at a Moscow secondary school



An Uzbek farmer seeing his four children off to school

per day by pupils increases with the educational stages, the primary having the lowest, the senior the highest (see pp. 66 and 67). The Head always does some teaching for which payment is made on the appropriate scale.

During the war particularly, teachers had, and still continue to have, many responsibilities outside the class-room. These are voluntary, but may be paid. Marking books in the three senior forms receives extra payment. Many extraneous duties have been taken over by the parents' council, freeing the staff for its proper task. Some of these are described in the chapter "Home and School".

School feeding became universal during the war. This is normally a hot lunch—comparable to English school dinners—taken about noon or earlier. It is customary for Soviet children to have dinner at home after school, any time from three to five p.m. During the war, and to-day with mothers absent, many schools are providing dinner as well as lunch. For other children many cities have organised special children's restaurants. School meals are paid for by the parents, except in needy cases or where there are very large families. During the war the children of serving men or women received free meals, and since the war children of men fallen in the war or disabled continue to do so. Most city schools have a buffet where buns, milk, sweets or fruit may be bought in the mid-morning break.

All schools have circles for leisure activities which are closely linked up with class activity. These may or may not be taken by the teachers; their services are sometimes recognised by payment, but there is no general ruling.

School begins at eight-thirty or nine a.m., according to local arrangements, and finishes at twelve-thirty or one p.m. for primary pupils, and at two or two-thirty p.m. for the rest. In 1944 physical exercises for fifteen minutes before school became compulsory for Junior and Senior Secondary Schools, except in particularly cold or stormy weather. Physical Training leaders (pupils) who take the exercises under the supervision of the Physical Training Instructor and with the class teacher present, are asked to keep a register of attendance, and they and the class teachers must make every effort to see that all children are present at least twenty minutes before school begins to allow for these exercises.

Morning assembly is not yet regularly practised in Soviet schools, though I have met it in some places, nor is there a general assembly before school is dismissed. Holidays follow the general continental

European pattern. In addition to the summer vacation there are two short holiday periods of two weeks each, in the spring and winter, which includes the New Year period. The summer holidays are three months—June, July and August—for kindergartens and primary and junior secondary schools, and for all except the Tenth Class in the senior secondary school for whom the matriculation diploma examination covers a period from May 20th to June 25th.

The school, of whatever stage, is generally linked by a system of adoption with some organisation outside. Every school has a patron which in industrial areas is generally a factory or trade union, in rural areas a collective farm, State farm or Machine and Tractor Station. It may also be a theatre, a scientific association or army unit. In its turn the school becomes a patron of a factory, a ship, a children's home and so on. As a patron, the school may arrange for the lunch-hour entertainments, provide talks, give readings and help the factory with publicity for industrial campaigns. It may look after children of the factory workers who need help. During the war the school child played a great part in whiling away the tedium in hospitals.

THE PRIMARY SCHOOL (SEVEN-ELEVEN YEARS)

Because pre-school education is not compulsory it happens that very many seven-year-olds arrive at school ignorant of the three R's. This applies in the main to remote and sparsely populated places. Elsewhere, even if the child is at home, efforts are made by the parents to provide the rudiments of at least reading and writing.

It is the general custom to celebrate the day before school begins as a School Festival during which children receive gifts. On the first day the new pupils are treated as guests. They are conducted round the school, introduced to the classes, are shown experiments in the laboratories and altogether are made to feel that school has exciting possibilities.

In a primary school a teacher takes all the subjects and goes up with the class. The curriculum includes Russian language (which covers reading and writing as well as elementary grammar), arithmetic, nature study, history and geography as separate subjects for Class IV only, physical training and art and music. In Classes I and II there are twenty-four lessons in the six-day week, i.e., a twenty-four-hour week, with ten minutes' break between each lesson and

fifteen minutes in the middle of the morning. Class III has twenty-five lessons, Class IV twenty-seven lessons and Classes V to X thirty-two lessons, with similar breaks, a lesson lasting forty-five minutes.

Soviet children do not escape homework. It begins with Class I where children are expected to give twenty to thirty minutes a day. The time increases as the pupil goes up in the school until in Class X, as in an Upper Sixth in England, it may take three hours or more. Just before the war, in response to complaints that too much was demanded from boys and girls, the practice of homework was being discussed and there were indications that the time would be reduced. This has in fact been done; the time-tables were reorganised in the 1944/45 school year. As stated previously, Nature study, History and Geography are no longer taken as subjects in the first three classes, they are covered by reading which comes under Russian or other Native language. This subject is by far the most important in the primary stage, for it is held that the ability to express oneself both on paper and orally is an essential for serious work in the future in any field—economic, industrial, political, scientific or artistic.

Next in importance to language at this stage comes arithmetic. In 1946 a foreign language was introduced for Class III and this is expected to become universal in all schools. Until that date except as an experiment in a selected number of schools, foreign languages began only in Class V.

In Russian or other Native language, great importance is attached to enlarging the vocabulary. This is linked with spelling and reading, and the elementary grammar arising out of the use of phrases. The following is an example of the syllabus covered in Class I (seven-year-olds) in this subject. By the end of the year (at eight years) pupils are expected to have learnt to write, to know when to use full stops and capitals, to be able to divide words into syllables, to know the use of three particularly difficult vowels and of the soft sign at the end or in the middle of a word (all difficult matters in the Russian language), and to be conversant with other difficult word combinations. Finally, they must be able to complete a sentence, to form sentences and write or say short connected passages as answers to questions. They must spell correctly within the limits of their acquired knowledge. Throughout the whole four-year course grammar in accordance with an established syllabus is taught but not as a separate subject—it arises logically and naturally out of the learning of the language.

The time given to Physical Training, Art and Music appears very little for the primary stage age group. One should however bear in mind the very considerable additional time spent on these subjects in the out of school establishments and school clubs during term and particularly during the holidays.

At the end of the fourth year comes the transfer examination for the next stage, and is the first serious examination to be taken.

THE MIDDLE STAGE—JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

This stage consists of three classes—V, VI and VII—all with specialist teachers. Russian or Native language, including literature, still plays the predominant rôle in the time-table, and a European foreign language receives more attention. Additional subjects in the curriculum are algebra, geometry and trigonometry, Constitution of the U.S.S.R. (taken in one year only), Physics, Chemistry and Draughtsmanship (design) which later replaces Art in Class VI. Since the 1946 decree which abolished Military Training, as part of Physical Training¹ the subject will have less time and a foreign language or Russian more.

It should be noted that all children take all the subjects in the curriculum and they are all expected to complete the same syllabus. Grading is according to age. The teacher is expected to find ways and means of helping the backward to reach the pass standard. Individual help is given where necessary both by the teacher and by brighter pupils. There is provision for taking the transfer examination again in August in case of failure. Where the failure is serious the pupil remains a second year, while provision is made for the very bright pupils to go on further. In exceptional cases such as that of a boy or girl showing brilliant mathematical or other gifts, a professor of the subject may be called in and special provision made.

With the conclusion of Class VII general education ends for about two-thirds of the boys and girls. Selection for future careers, for all of which a training period in some educational establishment or other will be necessary, takes place at this stage. All pupils in Class VII take the passing-out examination. Unless they can successfully take the examination again in August, those who fail may stay another year. For those who pass, the stream along which they go depends on the pupil's wishes, on his interests and special aptitudes, on the local environment, to a certain measure on the immediate needs of

¹ Except for boys of sixteen and seventeen years.

the country and on many other less tangible factors.

There is discussion with the class teacher about the choice of a career. Old pupils return to the school and describe their work and answer the questions put to them by the pupils. Representatives from different educational establishments are invited to talk to the pupils.

In July and August walls are placarded with advertisements such as "The Clothing Technicum will be accepting students on . . ." In buses and trains and in the press the pupils read advertisements from the different establishments. These they will discuss with parents and teachers. Universities and particularly single-faculty institutes of the different ministries advertise in the same way. A new practice for these is to have an Open Day for school-leavers when future students make acquaintance with the different institutes and meet some of the staff.

Whatever work a boy or girl finally takes up, he or she may pursue further education, and later, while at work, may specialise through the evening courses, or through them train for entirely different work or for a new profession.

THE SENIOR STAGE—SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL (FOURTEEN—SEVENTEEN/EIGHTEEN YEARS)

The pupils in this stage are the intellectually gifted and those interested in academic subjects who wish later to specialise in some branch of learning. There is no specialisation in the school itself. All pupils attending the same class take the same subjects irrespective of their future speciality. They all do geography in Classes VIII and IX, all do physics and chemistry, all do a foreign language. For these pupils specialisation begins in the University or Institute.

Teachers who are not graduates (internal or external) of Institutes of Education are expected to work to achieve this qualification.

The curriculum differs somewhat from the previous stage. Russian (Language and Literature) is dropped and replaced by the History of Literature, which now includes world literature. Arithmetic and Art were already dropped in Class VI of the middle stage. General Science and Geography are dropped in Class X. The remaining subjects for the last year for all pupils are Mathematics, History, Physics, Chemistry, a Foreign Language, Military and Physical Training, Draughtsmanship and Astronomy. In girls' schools, housecraft and elementary child psychology are taken

instead of military training¹. It is planned to introduce logic into the curriculum for boys and girls, but up to the time of writing neither syllabuses nor text-books are ready².

A decree of March 15th, 1947 introduced shorthand in fifty schools of the R.S.F.S.R. to begin with Class VIII. Another decree in August of the same year introduced Latin, at first in a selected number of Senior Secondary Schools, starting in September 1948. These are four schools in Moscow, two in Leningrad, three in Saratov, Sverdlovsk and Kazan. The curriculum like everything else is subject to change and, as may be seen, is generally introduced gradually. As the length of the school day has not increased there will be time-table adjustments.

The annual apportionment of time in the Senior Stage (Table D) allows for new developments.

In a number of girls' schools in cities a new class, Class XI, has been organised for the training of teachers for kindergartens and primary schools. This, a temporary measure, is one of the many ways used to mitigate the shortage of teachers.

In rural Junior and Senior Secondary Schools, in addition to the ordinary time-table, by the decree of 1942, two hours a week must be devoted to agricultural education (not to be confused with training for agriculture). The purpose of the course as stated in the decree is (a) "to provide the pupils with the elements of agricultural knowledge and the skills essential for intelligent and satisfactory work on a farm; (b) to strengthen and extend the knowledge of the elements of science given in school; (c) to inculcate an interest in and love for agricultural life and work". The syllabus covers plant cultivation, the care of farm animals and the practical use of agricultural machinery. This course is in fact an extension and practical application of the chemistry, nature study, physics and mathematics which have their place within the ordinary time-table, and it serves as preparation for the training for a farming life.

The pupils do practical work on the school plot which varies in size from half an acre to five acres. These plots often play the additional rôle of experimental stations for the improvement of strains and the introduction of new cultures on the surrounding collective farms. These mutually beneficial activities help to bind the school and the rural community closely together. Regional

¹ In classes IX and X.

² This has now been introduced. Syllabuses and text-books are out. June 1948.

study in rural areas is the basis for geography, history and much else, and acts as a stimulus to learning in all subjects.

There are rural schools like the Atmis Junior Secondary School in the Penza Region, where regional study has resulted in the creation of a regional museum with sections for minerals, plants, insects, soil and local folk-lore and historical documents. It became so famous that it has now been declared a State Regional Museum to be maintained by the government. In addition to the museum, the Atmis school set up a meteorology station which grew out of their studies of the weather. This has now become part of the meteorological service of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Science. Not all rural schools are as fortunate as the Atmis in their Head, but the drive to make rural education vigorous, alive to local needs and an inspiration to local life continues with increasing momentum.

At the end of Class X all those who have received not less than three out of five marks for all subjects in the year's work and five for conduct have the right to sit for the matriculation diploma. The compulsory subjects for this examination are Russian Grammar, Russian Literature, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, History—which includes History of the U.S.S.R. and Modern (World) History—and a Foreign Language. In Russian Grammar and Literature and Mathematics, the examination is both oral and written. In the remaining subjects the examination is oral only. (This explains why the examination requires so much time.)

The introduction of new subjects is likely to crowd the time-table and make too heavy demands on boys and girls. Indeed, there have been complaints from teachers and some parents that the syllabuses which schools have to cover are overloaded and that older boys and girls have to work far too many hours a day and have no time for leisure pursuits.

In response to the agitation measures are being taken. Already syllabuses have been simplified and cut. Now it is planned, as soon as conditions permit it, to extend the school period to eighteen, that is, to add another class to the Senior Secondary School. Georgia has already put the plan into operation. The extra year will allow the secondary course to be completed at a more leisurely pace, give ample time for recreation and avoid cramming.

RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL

TABLE A

The time spent on subjects during the ten-year course (in percentages).

N.B.—Language will be given more time, military training less even where taken. Figures are for 1946.

Russian Language, Literature,	
Reading, History of Literature	30.1%
Mathematics	21.9%
Physical and Military Training	9.6% (to be decreased)
Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy	8.9%
History and Constitution of U.S.S.R.	7.9%
Foreign Languages	6.8% (to be increased)
Geography	5.1%
General Science	4.8%
Art	3.5%
Music and Singing	1.4%
Logic added in 1948	—

CURRICULUM AND PERIODS (FOR A YEAR)

TABLE B

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Classes</i>			
	I	II	III	IV
	Hours			
Russian Language (reading and writing)	456	456	489	262
Arithmetic	229	229	196	229
General Science	—	—	—	97
History	—	—	—	81
Geography	—	—	—	81
Physical Training	33	33	66	66
Drawing	33	33	33	33
Singing	33	33	33	33
Total	784	784	817	882

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TABLE C

<i>Subjects</i>	V	<i>Classes</i>	
		VI	VII
		Hours	
Russian Language and Literary Reading	326	262	196 increased
Arithmetic	229	—	—
Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry	—	196	196
General Science	65	98	66
Civic History	66	81	66
Constitution of the U.S.S.R.	—	—	65
Geography	98	81	66
Physics	—	66	97
Chemistry	—	—	81
Foreign Languages	130	130	81 increased
Physical Training	98	98	98 decreased
Drawing	33	—	—
Draughtsmanship	—	33	33
Total	1,045	1,045	1,045

RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL

TABLE D

<i>Subjects</i>	<i>Classes</i>		
	VIII	IX	X
	Hours		
History of Literature	130	130	130
Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry	196	196	196
General Science	66	66	—
History	130	130	130
Geography	81	81	—
Physics	97	82	130
Astronomy	—	—	33
Chemistry	66	82	114
Foreign Language	116	115	115
Military and Physical Training	130 ¹	130	164 decreased considerably
Draughtsmanship	33	33	33
Total	1,045	1,045	1,045

¹ No military training here.

Chapter Six

SPECIAL TYPE SCHOOLS

SCHOOLS FOR THE ARTISTICALLY GIFTED

IN the capital and other large cities of the Soviet Union, there are special schools for children who show at an early age that they are highly gifted in music, in art and in dancing. These schools have boarding sections for children from distant places. They are senior secondary schools, which give the ordinary course of general secondary education, plus special training for the particular talents.

The schools are situated as close as possible to the adult institution of the particular art, the music schools near a conservatoire of music, the art schools near an Institute of Art, and so on. This facilitates the employment of the highly qualified specialists from the adult institute in the training of these youngsters, as well as the use of music-rooms and other special provisions.

It often happens that as a result of encouragement and practice in the kindergarten and in children's clubs, or as a result of parents' interest, a child shows evidence of talent at an early age—six or seven. In the music schools there have been exceptional cases of four-year-olds being accepted. The parent who believes his child to have special talent will arrange for a test in a conservatoire of music or in one of the Pioneer Palaces. Should the test, in the opinion of the musician or artist or ballet mistress, show promise of real talent, a recommendation will be made for the child's acceptance to one of these special schools. In the case of children living on collective farms, a test may entail a journey of several days. In such cases the expenses are borne by the collective farm. Should it turn out at the completion of the middle stage—fourteen years—that the early promise is not being fulfilled and that though talent is there it is not exceptional, the pupil will pass into a music or art technicum to train for general work in the profession. The education, and the board when necessary, are free in these schools. There is little uniformity about these special schools. They are expected,

however, to cover the common syllabus for ordinary subjects. In all other respects they are very individual.

The Moscow Art School may be cited as one type that takes children from the primary school—at eleven years—and keeps them until they are eighteen. It has two departments, painting and sculpture, the latter opened in 1945. The school day here lasts from six to eight hours. Throughout the course general education receives the major apportionment of time, which becomes progressively less however, as the pupils go up the school. It begins in Class IV with twenty-eight hours a week for general education and eight for the special subjects, and changes until the proportion is twenty-four hours for general and eighteen for special subjects in Class VII. The school holds weekly exhibitions, on Saturdays, of the best work done at home during the week. In this school, a Saturday concert has become a tradition. The best executants in music and drama, and authors and poets accept the school's invitation and perform at these concerts.

It is a firm principle of Soviet education that the highly gifted should also be good all-round citizens, interested in other fields of activity besides their own. Hence the insistence on the normal standard for general education. The children are encouraged to join the ordinary clubs in the Pioneer Palaces so as not to become a segregated class.

SCHOOLS FOR DEFECTIVES

Great progress has been made in the post-revolution years in education for defectives. Basic to all this work is research into causes, particularly into those of mental defects. Second comes research into methods, stressing the right approach and the content of this particular education.

The Institutes of the Brain both in Leningrad and Moscow have departments for research into mental retardation of children. In the Institute of Pediatrics, the institute where children's doctors and specialists are trained, the Department of Child Development also carries on research. It is further carried on for the early years—birth to three—in the appropriate sections of the Scientific Research Institute of Mother and Child Welfare. In addition, the Academy of Educational Science in Moscow has an Institute of Defectology and the Herzen Pedagogical Institute has a similar department.

The aims of the education of defectives everywhere are to make

the pupils as nearly normal as possible, to give them a feeling of being part of the general community, to equip them to be self-supporting as far as possible, and certainly in the case of physical defectives to encourage any inclination to further education by providing every possible facility.

There are special schools for the deaf and dumb and for the blind. I have no personal acquaintance with the latter, but some of the deaf and dumb schools I knew very well.

For the deaf and dumb children under seven there are kindergartens. The numbers in a group are small, about twelve to fifteen. Special attention is paid to apparatus, didactic material and the appearance of the class-room. Lip reading is employed, as is any method that will encourage even the most rudimentary speech and hearing. To help with the latter, there is varied treatment under the doctor's supervision, as well as the use of continually improving electrical apparatus, designed not to replace hearing but rather to stimulate the aural nerves. The child's environment is made as visually rich as possible.

General education for defectives is compulsory up to sixteen years. In the schools for the deaf and dumb every effort is made to cover the subjects and syllabus of the ordinary school and is successful for a large proportion of the pupils. Practical work plays an important part, and the Junior and Senior Secondary Schools have well-equipped workshops for woodwork and electrical work, a smithy, and, for the girls, needlework rooms. More time is spent on practical work in these schools than in the normal school.

Most of these schools are of the boarding type, and guided leisure activities (music, dramatics, dancing, handwork and sport), make their contribution to the fulness of life for these handicapped youngsters.

In this stage, as in the kindergarten, everything possible is done to give some power of speech and hearing, and there is a high percentage of success. The finger alphabet is not encouraged, lip-reading being considered preferable. Here there is a variety of mechanical apparatus for individual and group use.

All teachers in schools for defectives are required to take a four-years' training course in the special institutes or departments. Their salary is twenty-five per cent higher than that of teachers in normal schools. The classes are smaller, and, in theory at least, their day is shorter. In many of the senior secondary schools,

pecially qualified members of the staff carry on experiments and investigation, making a valuable contribution to the general store of knowledge and experience.

Schools for mental defectives are set up wherever necessary. A child is certified as mentally defective only after a thorough examination by a number of different specialists. Once it has been so certified, it may not remain in the ordinary school. As will be expected, boarding schools are in many cases the only way of providing for such children. The schools are attached to the neuropathology department of a hospital, and all children will have periodic examinations and regular treatment where at all useful.

The groups are very small and much individual work is done. The teacher and the Head, therefore, are expected to be fully cognisant of the pupils' development, or lack of it.

All the teaching is active. Everything is learnt through doing. Special films are made, and projection of every type is employed. Of the arts, music and dancing particularly are used to make life brighter. Here, again, the aim is to turn out these children able to support themselves and to deal with the daily needs of life.

The teachers, wherever conditions make it feasible, are in close touch with the homes. Training parents in a right attitude and approach to their retarded or defective children is regarded as an important duty for the teacher. Education in all these schools is free.

For children with other kinds of physical incapacity, tuberculosis, rheumatism and rheumatic hearts, there are again special schools, called schools for physical rehabilitation. Of these, the most general are Forest Schools, run by Departments of Education and quite often by Trade and Professional Unions for the children of their members. Those run by the latter generally provide treatment free. In the others the parents pay for maintenance if they can afford it. In these schools a special régime, in which fresh air, diet, sleep and rest periods are the most important factors, is planned by the doctor. The diet includes additional fats, milk and proteins. These schools have their own market gardens and orchards and are sure of a plentiful supply of fruit and vegetables.¹ Very often there is a small farm, and cows, poultry and bees are an accepted part of the domestic economy.

¹ This held good also for the war years, except in occupied territories.

The curriculum is similar to that of the ordinary school, but the syllabus is considerably curtailed. Lessons are all of short duration (the maximum is thirty minutes) and wherever possible they are given in the open air. Here, as everywhere, creative self-expression through the arts is considered important. As these schools are in the country, nature study, particularly the study of birds, has a special place in the curriculum.

For tubercular children, there are special open air schools, varying from schools for incipient T.B. to bad cases. The stay here ranges from six months to as long as eight or ten years, that is, as long as is necessary to effect a cure, or, alternatively, till the end of the school period—eighteen years.

Education in these schools of necessity varies with the gravity of the disease. For walking cases, there are classes; for bed cases there is, where necessary, individual teaching such as that given to orthopædic bed cases in the L.C.C.'s Queen Mary's Hospital for Children in Carshalton, England.

In the Soviet Union, as elsewhere, teachers who have special aptitude for this work can enable handicapped children to go through the normal school course and to achieve an academic standard equal to that of any healthy child.

On leaving these T.B. schools, the children continue under medical supervision, in their home surroundings. Those who leave to go into industry are directed to the special workshops, where the conditions of work are such as not merely to prevent a recurrence of an attack, but to help towards complete recovery where that has not yet been achieved.

LABOUR RESERVE SCHOOLS

The 1940 decree (described earlier), designed to ensure a reserve of trained labour, stated that one million boys aged fourteen-fifteen were to be recruited for a course of training for the major industries, mining, building, engineering and transport.

The methods employed to popularise this measure were so successful that in the first year there were twice as many applicants as there were places in the trade schools. After the first year these courses were opened to girls on the same conditions as to boys. The upheaval caused by the war reduced the numbers entering, and in 1945 it was under five hundred thousand.

These trade schools are boarding establishments; the actual

training itself is carried on in special factory shops and laboratories within the works. The responsibility for the boarding house and the training facilities rests ultimately with the industry for which the youths are being trained, and immediately with the particular works. The cost of training, board and pupils' clothing is borne by the State.

The course lasts two years; the pupils work a seven-hour day, and general education includes Russian Language and Literature, History, Geography and Soviet Constitution. The special education is thus both theoretical and practical. Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics are related to the industrial operations that are being learnt and the materials that are being used are studied in laboratories or class-rooms. In addition, the trainees are given an understanding of the part their industry plays in the economy and development of the country. In order to develop adaptability, the pupils are taught a number of operations involving the use of different lathes. While on production they are paid at normal trade union rates, and they retain their full pay which is banked for them and which they withdraw when they leave.

The boarding house has to provide varied facilities for recreation, intellectual, physical and artistic. The music and dramatic circles are generally the most popular; chess has a high place, as well as sport; and literature, art and crafts, all play their part. The quality and quantity of this provision for leisure naturally varies with the enthusiasm of the home staff and the interest taken by the factory.

On completing the course, the trainees (now qualified) are directed to work for three years in an industry run by one of the ministries. Their military call-up is deferred. At the end of the three years they are free to qualify for a new profession, to specialise, or to take a job anywhere else if they so desire it.

This method of ensuring trained workers has proved highly successful. This youthful labour force rendered a fine account of itself during the war. In addition to the normal day's work these young people gave many hours overtime to make equipment for trade schools in newly liberated cities. By 1950 it is planned to have six thousand of these trade schools.

There is a six months' course for training for industry known as Factory Apprentice Schools. Anybody round about sixteen, irrespective of time spent on previous education, who wants to go into industry without necessarily acquiring a high standard of skill,



Boys from a trade school in Baku who are training for the oil industry



Borrowing books from the library

is accepted for this course. The training is given in the factory or works, and is mostly practical, but includes Russian Language, a subject that is never absent from any course. These courses are run by the factories and, like much other training, are of a temporary nature, though the contingency which has given rise to them may last some years.

The Trade School No. 22 in Moscow for the training of Metal Workers, may serve as an example of the serious approach of the best schools to this type of training for industry. The school has a number of shops which include a cold process shop, a turning machine department with over eighty units, a fitter's shop with two hundred young workers, a fitting and moulding section with seventy-five young workers, and a cutting machine department for twenty workers. The cold process shop has over two hundred educational aids of all kinds. The equipment, instruments, appliances and apparatus give it the appearance of an experimental engineering laboratory. It contains everything necessary for the teaching of the special technology of turning, cutting, drilling and planing lathes. The machines make it possible for instructors not only to demonstrate the design of the whole and of details, but also to explain the theory of machine tool working. In addition, there are appliances for testing durability, pliability and the tensile strength of metals. There are two special study rooms in the turners' and moulding departments; there are rooms for the study of materials, two drawing offices, a physics room, two Russian language rooms, and two mathematics rooms. The class-room lesson is the basic form of teaching in the Trade Schools. The time-table is divided into three consecutive days' theory followed by three days' practice. In this school good students earn as much as three hundred roubles per month in their production practice. Below is the régime followed in Trade School No. 22:

Rising	6.30 a.m.
Making beds, physical exercises, etc.	6.30-7.30 a.m.
Breakfast and free time	7.30-8.30 a.m.
Lessons (first four) including twenty minutes' rest	8.30 a.m.-12.30 p.m.
Lunch and free time	12.20-2 p.m.
Lessons (fifth and sixth)	2-3.50 p.m.
General or group roll call and free time	3.50-4.30 p.m.
Cultural activities	4.30-6 p.m.

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Homework	6-7.30 p.m.
Supper and free time	7.30-8.30 p.m.
Evening toilet, personal needs	8.30-10 p.m.
Bed	10 p.m.

Another type of special school is the Special Vocational School. Following on the liberation of large areas by the Red Army, education authorities were faced with the problem of boys and girls aged twelve to thirteen years, whose experience under occupation made ordinary school in their view pointless and profitless. They had been playing the part of adults, often very successfully, and now they were expected to sit behind desks with immature children. They simply ignored exhortations to attend school. The authorities solved the problem by setting up in 1943, in the Leningrad Region, twenty-three special vocational schools. Their number has been increased considerably, and they may be found in other than liberated districts.

They might be termed junior trade schools. The entrance age is twelve. The curriculum includes essential academic subjects, Russian (Language and Literature), History, Geography, and practical subjects such as Engineering, Building, or whatever may be desired. The workshops are run like those in adult industry, with the necessary adjustment to youthful physique. The conditions of work for discipline and pay approach as nearly as possible those in adult factories; the pupils remain in these schools until they are sixteen, when they enter industry. It has been found that these schools satisfy the need for the serious practical purpose in life which these youngsters with their war experience demand. At the same time a good all-round general education is given.

Another type of special school, which was also created in 1943, is the Suvorov School. This, like the Nakhimov School, which is for the navy, was designed to solve two problems: to provide a home and care for war orphans, and to train future officers in the two services. Suvorov like Nakhimov schools, are for boys only. Priority is given to sons of men, privates or officers, who fell at the front, and some of those who fell fighting as guerillas. Then come boys whose fathers distinguished themselves either at the front or as guerillas, and lastly, boys whose parents desire them to become officers. These schools, nine of which were set up in 1943, and a dozen more in 1944, vary in size from one hundred and fifty to five hundred pupils and serve both as home and school. Dormitories,

halls, class-rooms, science laboratories and accommodation for leisure, together with workshops for manual work and crafts, form a self-contained whole. The directors of these schools are generally high-ranking officers. The staff includes men and women teachers and additional men of officer rank. These latter are responsible for the general character training and tone, and each has twenty-five boys in his charge.

Pupils are accepted at the age of eight and are given a nine-year course. During the war and immediately after, an exception was made and admission was granted to a few boys of twelve and thirteen and even fourteen who had taken an active part in the warfare. The curriculum covers the subjects of the ordinary school, with a slightly different bias. More time is given to mathematics, while foreign language lessons begin at eight years instead of nine years, since 1947.

Singing, which is dropped from the three upper classes in the ordinary Senior Secondary School, is taken throughout the course in the Suvorov School. As soon as it is judged suitable, history and geography are approached from a world point of view, and not a national one. History includes ancient history, which discusses such themes as "the tribal structure of Greek Society in the time of Homer". Pupils have to explain "what they learn from the Iliad and the Odyssey". The Suvorov boys are expected to complete the ordinary ten-year course in nine years.

As is to be expected in these schools, a thorough study is made of the theory and practice of military training, and the course becomes more concentrated as the boys move up the school. Additional compulsory subjects are folk and ballroom dancing, while physical training includes riding, fencing and field sports.

The discipline is stricter than in the ordinary school but it has to be obtained without the use of any special measures. Corporal punishment is excluded here as elsewhere. The general school régime (there is a fixed duty roster in and out of the class-room), the regard in which these schools are held by the community, and above all, the quality of the teachers and others in charge are all expected, in combination, to produce the necessary discipline. Special courses are arranged to help the educators in these schools. The daily free time gives scope for intellectual and emotional as well as physical relaxation for the boys.

Not by any means do all the boys finally enter military or naval

academies proper, to qualify as army or naval officers. At the age of sixteen the choice of career is reviewed and it has been found that a number of boys change their minds and decide to enter medicine, journalism, the law, or other civilian professions. These go on to the appropriate technical school to complete their training for a civilian profession.

TECHNICUMS

These are schools which train what in the Soviet Union is called a middle grade specialist. They train for industry, administration, arts, for education, the law and nursing; in fact, for any branch of the country's life for which medium qualified personnel is required. They are, as already explained,¹ the responsibility of the Ministry, industrial trust, or any other executive body which requires such trained people. For example, a mining trust which needs junior personnel, will set up a mining technicum; if the Ministry of Home Affairs needs junior legal assistants it will open a law technicum. A few years ago the State Bank discovered a shortage of engravers, so it opened a school for engravers. Actresses, artists and musicians of average ability are trained in theatre, art or music technicums. A technicum trains all its pupils in one and the same speciality. The educational direction is controlled by the Ministry of Education. In 1940-41 there were three thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight such schools with eight-hundred-and-two-thousand, two hundred students. This figure includes students in teacher-training schools. The figures for 1945-46 are given below:

TECHNICUMS—1945-46

<i>Technicums</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>No. of Students</i>
Industrial	748	298,000
Transport and Communications	182	62,000
Agriculture	531	118,600
Economics	180	59,500
Law	25	5,600
Teaching Schools	699	163,700
Medical	613	160,100
Arts	174	24,000
	3,152	891,700

¹ See p. 22.

The war losses have almost been made good. This professional education has its training by correspondence too. In 1945-46 there were eight correspondence schools and nine correspondence departments at the industrial and transport technicums. The correspondence courses for Teaching Schools are mentioned elsewhere. (Page 99.)

Boys and girls are accepted in technicums on successful completion of the Junior Secondary Schools. The course in the technicum varies in length from three to four years, and occasionally reaches five years.

Five per cent of the students of a technicum may, on successfully completing the course, apply immediately for admission to a university. They are accepted on the same conditions as pupils from the Senior Secondary School; that is, if they obtain the matriculation diploma and win a gold medal entrance examination is waived, otherwise they have to sit for examination. The rest of the pupils will only be accepted in a university or institute after they have done four years' work in the profession for which they were trained, and after satisfying the requirements for entrance. The period of work is insisted upon to ensure the flow of skilled people into the country's organisations.

The course in the technicum has to cover the same curriculum and syllabus in general education as that in the three upper forms of the Senior Secondary School, so that, in addition to being qualified in a particular speciality, their pupils' general education is expected to reach a standard comparable to the English Higher School Certificate. The theoretical training for the speciality will be covered largely by the subjects already being taken. For example, in a nursing technicum, the necessary physiology, anatomy, etc., will come within the course under general science, while the mathematics, physics, etc., required for engineering, will likewise come within the curriculum. It is in the actual syllabus that changes occur, more time being given to the subjects that are directly concerned with the speciality.

Production practice, as distinct from practical work in the laboratory or technicum workshop on the school premises, generally begins in the third year and is allotted considerable time. It is carried on in the actual place of work, in the hospital, engineering works, textile works or other appropriate organisation.

The staff is all specialised and is expected to have university qualifications. The organisation, discipline, methods and life

generally are not unlike those in the upper classes of the Senior Secondary School. A little more responsibility is expected from the pupils, who, except for the five per cent, will be going out into the world and not into a university, as is the case at school. At seventeen, eighteen or nineteen years they will have responsible jobs and will play a practical part in the improvement of the standard of living for their country.

CONTINUED EDUCATION

Schools for continued education were created as a solution to a war problem. After the Soviet Union was attacked, thousands of boys and girls left school at any age after twelve in order to go into factories to help with the production which the country needed so desperately. It was not many months after June 22nd, 1941 that these youngsters began to receive news of the loss of a father or a brother, and of the incredible brutalities and torture, of rape and wanton destruction by Nazi soldiers. This meant that thousands of boys and girls who would normally have completed the Senior Secondary School, not only did not achieve this, but did not even finish the Junior Secondary School.

In 1943 official steps were taken to deal with this situation. A decree published early that year ordered all works and enterprises, where any reasonable number of young adolescents were employed, to provide facilities in the works for continued education so that all might reach the Senior Secondary School standard. Class-rooms, fully equipped laboratories, and teaching staffs were to be provided by the factory or works.

These schools for "Working Youth"¹ (as they are known) have now been in existence for five years, and it is very likely that they will continue for a number of years longer, until such time as it is possible to give everybody a full secondary education.

Attendance is supposed to be obligatory, but as so often happens, a Russian, young or old, who cannot see the value or purpose of a regulation ignores it, and there was considerable concern in 1944-45 at the absenteeism from these courses. The task of persuading the youngsters of the desirability of attendance is laid upon the Works Management and unfortunately this duty is not discharged as it should be in every case.

¹ There are similar schools for the provision of full secondary education for rural youth.

Professor S. M. Rievers writing on these schools¹ as they function in Moscow, expressed the view of those who are not so concerned over this absenteeism. Certainly everything that can reasonably be done must be done to attract the youth into these schools, but he is against any measures that would weaken the feeling of responsibility on the part of the boy or girl, and he is against tutelage or severe interrogation. "Let those for whom study in these schools of Working Youth is beyond them, leave, but let the school train a conscious right attitude to learning among those who not only in words, but in deed, wish to learn. A teacher said somewhere, 'Here learn those who wish to learn.' In this lies the strength of these schools for working youth."

The course lasts the same number of years as would have been spent in the secondary school. Girls and boys attending the school are not allowed to work overtime or to be given any duties that may interfere with their regular attendance. They are freed from work in the factory (receiving their pay) during the examination period, at the end of Class VII and Class X.

The syllabus is exactly the same as that covered in the ordinary schools and here arise the difficulties which have stimulated the teachers to observation and experiment. While the study year lasts eleven months (which is longer than that of the ordinary school), the school in the factory functions for each pupil, only for four hours daily on three days a week. The time is fixed to fit in with the working hours of the various sets of girls and boys. In spite of the shorter time for study and the fact that these young people are working six hours a day, the same syllabus is expected to be covered.

Since it is obviously impossible to take all the subjects concurrently, the year has hitherto been divided into three terms, with a cycle of subjects to be taken each term.² It requires considerable thought and intelligence to avoid planning a cycle in which all book work, such as literature, foreign language and history is done in one term, while realising the importance of the correlation of subjects in the same period. In addition to the class lesson, there is group and individual consultation—the tutorial method—frequent oral testing, and a good deal of homework. Many educationists have for some time been dissatisfied with this three-term arrangement, and with the number of hours per week. It has been suggested that the year

¹ *Sovietskaya Pedagogika*, No. 4, *Akademia Ped. Naûk*, 1945.

² This plan of work has now been changed. 1948.

should be divided into two terms, and that the actual teaching time which does not include consultations might be lengthened. It is possible that, by the time this is in print, the first suggestion at least may have been adopted. This is an educational field where very much is left to the initiative, experience and ability of the teacher.

Whatever methods of organisation are adopted, one thing is certain; a full secondary education, including a foreign language, will be made available to more and more young workers.

In Moscow, in the school year 1944-45, seven thousand boys and girls taking this continued course passed the Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary leaving examinations with good marks.

Another type of school is run by the co-operative movement for the training of young salesmen and saleswomen and for junior clerical and administrative staffs. This type also provides some general education in addition to the specialised training.

CHILDREN'S HOMES

Children's Homes do not properly come within the classification special type of school, but they too are educational establishments under the authority of the Ministry of Education which has its Research Department in this field, and should therefore be described here.

As will be expected, the number of these Homes has greatly increased as a result of the war, for the Nazis rendered orphan more children in the U.S.S.R. than in any other country.

Although the Homes are primarily for orphans, they also take children of unmarried mothers for whom under the difficulties and stringencies of the immediate post-war period it is not easy to provide the desirable conditions for upbringing. Children may also be sent from homes when family conditions are such as to be definitely harmful to the child. Not all the Homes are set up by the State or its departments. As some slight repayment of the debt that the people owe to the Soviet Army, and also because of the feeling of collective responsibility for children as children which is such a strong feature of the Russian character, literally hundreds of Homes have been built, furnished and equipped, either locally by the people themselves, or by collective farms, trade and professional unions, scientific associations, theatre companies and so on.

These Homes are considered to be educational institutions within the general education system. Their tasks are (a) care of the health

and normal physical development of the child, (b) to ensure progress at school, (c) moral training, training in habits of work (labour), and (d) æsthetic training, development of initiative, creative abilities, and amateur activity. Character or moral training includes training in love of country and it is emphasised that children must be made aware "of the unbreakable link between Soviet patriotism and internationalism—the community of interest of the Soviet Union and all freedom loving peoples. . . ."

Children are accepted in these Homes at four years and remain there up to fourteen and fifteen years. They attend the kindergarten or school in the village or town near the Home. The great majority of them on reaching the leaving age go either into the collective farms or into schools which provide training for the industries of primary importance. As is the general practice those who show an intellectual or artistic bias will proceed either to a Senior Secondary School or to a technicum.

Each Home has its own farm of considerable size, producing its own vegetables, fruit, poultry, dairy and meat products, and often its own grain.

The Home is staffed by a director and assistants known in Russian as VOSPITATELY, that is, "upbringers." In addition to providing that individual relationship and affection so essential to the happiness and serenity of a child, they are responsible for the character training, in short, for the development of the creative personality, for the education of the child as the "complete man". There is, of course, a domestic staff, including an accountant and cashier.

The educational staff has not only to be qualified, but it has to continue improving its qualifications through specially organised courses. Owing to the serious shortage of qualified people, short-term three-month courses were organised as a temporary measure. A brief description of this course, and of the course for improving qualifications will give the reader a good idea of the Soviets' conception of what a Children's Home should be.¹

The short course for untrained people who desire to be accepted on the staff comprises:

1. Education	50 hours.
2. Psychology	36 „

¹ The British Home Office began last year (1947) elementary short courses for workers in children's institutions.

RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL

3.	Content and method of educational work in children's homes	40 hours.
4.	Hygiene and child care	20 "
5.	Physical training and games (practical)	50 "
6.	Manual work or the arts (practical according to choice)	100 "
7.	Agriculture and the activities of young naturalists	40 "
8.	Russian language including method of teaching	80 "
9.	Arithmetic and methods	70 "
10.	Education practice in a Home	100 "
		Total 586 "

In addition there are lectures: eighteen hours.

An examination is compulsory on completion of the course in Educational Psychology and methods of upbringing in a Children's Home.

On being appointed to the staff of a Children's Home, these educators, including the director and assistants, are expected, in their free time, to take up a further course; they are on duty for eight hours a day. This further course lasts for fifteen days for those who have had previous training in education, and thirty days for others. It covers the following:

For Directors with educational qualifications (fifteen days).

1.	A study of Stalin's <i>The Great Patriotic War in the Soviet Union</i>	15 hours.
2.	Practical questions in content and method of education and training in a Children's Home	35 "
3.	Manual work in the home workshops	15 "
4.	The auxiliary farm and agricultural training of the children	15 "
5.	The organisation of a Children's Home	10 "
6.	The economics of a Home—accounts, etc.	10 "
7.	Visiting Children's Homes	12 "
		Total 112 "

For Directors who have not had any educational training, the course has to include Education, Psychology, Work on the Farm, Leisure Activities, Physical Training (including health and hygiene), and Teaching Practice. Assistants who have completed a course at a training college or some other educational institution may specialise in literature and the arts for example, or in nature-study work. Subjects one and two in the director's course are compulsory for every course, as are content and methods of the particular subject and teaching practice. Untrained assistants take subjects one, two, three, four, seven and ten in the course for untrained people, with the addition of Leisure Activities (including a practice course).

Plans for the courses with detailed syllabuses and instructions were issued by the then Commissariat, now Ministry of Education, in 1944. The Ministry also publishes a series of recommended syllabuses for every subject, or more correctly, for every out of school activity, manual work, the arts, farm work, etc. In order to maintain a good standard of progress in their school work, suggestions on helping with each school subject and on supervising homework are issued periodically by the Ministry of Education's Special Department of Methods for Children's Homes. The teaching staff of a Home, while not actually giving lessons, has to supervise the school work and aid in the general intellectual and emotional growth of their charges—hence the need for training.

The leisure activities of a Children's Home are expected to include, as a regular feature and in addition to the children's sports and other occupations, visits to theatres, cinemas, concerts, museums, etc., excursions to places of interest and treks into the country as well as a study of their own district. Much is made of manual work to inculcate habits and discipline of work and a love of work.

Training in responsibility begins with the youngest. There are children's group committees and a children's council for the Home. They elect their own prefects and monitors.

The staff, too, has its council and its committees and there is close co-operation between the educational staff and the domestic staff. A Children's Home even more than a school depends for its happiness on its staff, educational and domestic, but particularly the former. Badly-run homes do exist, but the interest of the local community sooner or later brings to light the shortcomings. Full publicity is given to such cases and appropriate measures are always taken regardless of the susceptibilities of a local council or any individual.

Chapter Seven

HIGHER EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION comprises universities—both multi-faculty institutions and single faculty institutions. After the revolution the changing conditions of the country with their tempestuous industrial development, led to the creation of a great many single faculty institutes often narrowly specialised.

In the re-organisation of education in 1932, after the completion of the First Five-Year Plan, new conditions brought a change. To-day there are universities in every capital of the sixteen republics, and in addition, in many important cities such as Kharkov, Kazan (which has an old university), Omsk, Tomsk and others. These are known as State Universities of such or such city.

A university comprises faculties and departments. An institute has departments with their chairs. The usual number of departments for industrial institutes is six, for agricultural, two or three, and for medical institutes two (curative and prophylactic).

The newly created Ministry for Higher Education (1945) is responsible for universities¹ and all-union institutes, while ministries, and industrial or agricultural trusts, are responsible for the institutes which train the specialists needed in their particular spheres.

The Ministry for Higher Education confirms all curricula and syllabuses, and presents plans for the construction of new universities and institutes. Other Ministries, such as Heavy Industry, Building, Transport, Health, have their departments for Higher Education which deal specifically with their own establishments, while being generally subordinate to the Ministry for Higher Education.

It is claimed that this centralised control makes it possible to regulate the training of specialists according to the country's need, so that a situation when there are too many oil engineers and not

¹ See Appendix V.

enough construction engineers, or too many industrial designers and not enough architects, is avoided. In actual fact, there have never yet been too many specialists in any field of activity. The problem has been to ensure to every field its share.

Every university and institute has a number of post-graduate students (from twenty to one hundred) known as "Aspirants", who are working for the degree of *candidate* with the object of obtaining either a teaching post in a higher education institution, or a responsible research post. Many of the Aspirants have completed two or more years' work in their particular speciality before being accepted for a course. They are required to pass an entrance examination to the course in their speciality, and in a foreign language, and they must submit a thesis on some topic concerned with their speciality.

The post-graduate student is attached to a professor who supervises the course. For two of the three years of the course the student works under a professor. The third year he spends working up his degree thesis. Post-graduates, of which in 1945 there were four thousand nine hundred and thirty-six, pay no fees: in fact, they receive a grant of seven hundred roubles¹ a month.

The Institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. and of the constituent republics set up a few years ago Doctorate Institutes or "Doctorantura", establishments where candidates may work for a Doctorate. Candidates for Doctorate Institutes may be nominated by a university and must be approved by a joint commission of the Academy of Sciences and the Ministry for Higher Education. Candidates working for a doctorate in an institute receive a grant of one thousand five hundred roubles a month.

The Head of a university is the Rector, and he has two assistants, one for academic work and the other, the bursar, for administration. His staff includes deans of faculties, professors and assistant professors of departments, readers and assistants (in Russian, "dotsenty") and lecturers.

The dean's responsibility for his faculty includes staffing, organisation and discipline. The bursar, or administrator, is responsible for a whole university or institute. Professors are required to engage in research work; it may be noted that they spend far less time in administration than is the practice in England.

Every university or institute has its Senate, literally "Learned Council", on which sit the Rector, his two assistants, the deans of

¹ See "The Value of the Rouble," p. 178.

the faculties, readers, and representatives of the student organisations. This is a consultative body in regard to academic work and any questions that arise in connection with it, and it judges the theses for degrees. In addition there are faculty committees for matters chiefly academic which affect the faculty only.

Salaries have increased considerably since 1940 and professors may reach a salary of ten thousand roubles per month. In addition there is an increasing number of scholarships, founded in the names of great leaders, such as the Joseph Stalin Scholarships, or—among the latest (May 1946)—the Academician Bakh Scholarships, founded in honour of the great eighty-nine year old bio-chemist on his death, or a later one still, founded in honour of the great surgeon, Burdenko. These are awarded to members of the faculty and to students, and vary in value and duration.

Scientists, which is the Russian term for all engaged in the learned professions, whether chemistry or literature—active scholars is perhaps a better description in English—are held in the greatest esteem, not merely by the government but by the whole people. I remember how I went up in the esteem of the floor supervisor of my hotel in Leningrad when she learnt that I knew Academician Keller, the botanist, and that he had actually been to my home in London. During the grim war years special provision was made for the intellectual workers in order to enable them to carry on their creative work.

The members of the faculty everywhere are closely linked with the life outside the university, and have strong social and political interests. Many of them are deputies to the Supreme Soviet, many more to the Soviet of their particular republic, and many serve on their city councils. Organised workers turn readily to professors or lesser lights in the learned profession for advice and information.

Research plays a very important part in every university and institute, and facilities for it are increasing everywhere. In many institutes, research forms the major activity. These institutes, like the departments in a university, have access for their field work to certain animal breeding stations or to whatever they may need. While most of the research arises directly out of the needs of industry, agriculture, or education, there is much of what in Britain is known as “pure” research, with the difference that in the Soviet Union the term “pure” as relating to research is regarded as unreal.

During the war there was a considerable increase in applied

research everywhere, but it was not only in science that research continued. It went on uninterruptedly in the humanities too. No Arts Faculties were closed, though the number of students diminished at first. In fact, in 1943 the Moscow State University actually opened three new Arts Faculties, while the Kazan University, in September 1944, opened a new department of Tartar Language and Literature.

The number of departments in a university is continually increasing as the demand for highly qualified specialists in any subject increases. For example, in the academic year 1943-44, a department for international relations was opened at the Moscow State University to train personnel for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. In 1944-45 a Department for Eastern Studies (with many sub-divisions) was opened. A considerable number of new chairs was created, covering such subjects as seismology, the history of physics, the physics and chemistry of catalysis. By September 1946 Moscow State University had twelve departments with one hundred and fifty chairs. It also had eleven research institutes with over one hundred laboratories. The Academic Staff of Moscow University consisted in 1944 of nine hundred and eighty-four professors and assistant professors. The students numbered seven thousand, of which one thousand seven hundred and twenty were freshmen.

Leningrad University is equally imposing in its size and scope, though it will have taken longer to restore all the services and faculties, for the Nazi destruction was very great in that city. The universities elsewhere are modelled more or less on the lines of those in Moscow and Leningrad.

University life is mainly residential, accommodation for residence and leisure being provided in hostels at a cost of fifteen roubles a month. In Moscow this accommodation has reached the proportions of a students' city which provides all the amenities of a community; shops, laundries, cinemas and so on.

THE STUDENTS

A higher education course in the Soviet Union implies a training for a definite profession. The student has selected his future career before entry. Naturally such a decision is not irrevocable, but aided by the discussion on careers that has proceeded in the last school year, the future student is expected to have given sufficient thought to the matter and to have made the right choice. He will therefore have decided on his final speciality before beginning his course. Thus

a boy or girl very interested in chemistry will decide beforehand whether it is to be oil chemistry or bio-chemistry. Similarly, one who has selected literature will have decided before university entry whether the speciality is to be classical or modern, Russian or European. Those interested in medicine will decide beforehand whether they will be general practitioners for adults or children, or whether they will specialise.

Entrance to university or institute is contingent upon qualifying through the school matriculation diploma or through an entrance examination. The age limits for acceptance of students are from seventeen to thirty-five years.

Those over thirty-five who decide to take a course of higher education may do so at any of the extra-mural institutions, at evening courses, or by correspondence.

In addition to those who come direct from the Senior Secondary Schools, there are those from the technicums—the successful five per cent—and students who come direct from industry, agriculture or other work, through evening preparatory courses for higher education.

Thus the student body in any university or institute is well mixed in age and experience. A number may be already married and some have small children. To help women students with such responsibilities there are nurseries and kindergartens free, as part of the student service. It is fairly common for students to marry during their training; when they do, the necessary adjustment in living quarters is made. Parenthood is not encouraged during the course, but should a baby be expected, the expectant student mother is given three months' leave which is spent in the special homes provided for this purpose. On her return, the baby will be placed in the university nursery. It is, however, becoming more and more the accepted thing to put off marriage until the end of the course.

It is the practice for students to join the trade or professional union which covers the industry or profession in which they have elected to work. And a great proportion of them, if they have not already done so, will become members of the Komsomol.¹

At the age of eighteen they all receive the vote; that is, they are citizens with full political rights. At twenty-three they may be elected as parliamentary deputies even while students.

¹ The Leninist Young Communist League.

They are, as students, aware of and interested in the various problems which face their country. This is true of almost all the students. They are, however, by no means the solemn body of youth that this might imply. All of them, in school clubs, in pioneer palaces, in workers' clubs, or collective-farm clubs, will have taken part in some creative leisure activity. This is continued in the university and institute. Amateur music, drama and sports have their place. Dancing is very popular and the annual university ball has come back to its place of honour even if shorn of a little of its former glory. Alpine clubs and touring clubs are popular—all students have the right to reduced fares. In the winter vacation ski-ing parties are arranged. Even the cocoa-parties of English women's colleges have their counterpart, with tea substituted for cocoa. There is however a total absence of drinking parties. There are no fees in any of the clubs for any activity. Tickets to the theatres at reduced prices or wholly free are among the privileges of students.

There is no discrimination of any kind against women, who are accepted, either as students or as members of the faculty, on exactly the same terms as men throughout the whole of higher education including medicine and law. Indeed in medicine women students have long outnumbered the men. And in 1940, women formed forty-three per cent of the whole student body of the U.S.S.R.

The students' council for the university and student committees for departments both assume considerable responsibility for discipline which, in the main, is concerned with work, attendance at lectures and seminars, and only secondarily with behaviour. Escapades such as those that are from time to time reported of students at the older British Universities, "binges" and "rags", would seem to the Soviet student a very childish form of amusement. As citizens who have reached maturity they are held to be responsible for their non-academic lives and there is an absence of any restrictive regulations. On the other hand there is continued agitation for what the Russians call "cultured" conduct or what we should call civilised conduct, both as regards personal appearance and consideration for others. It is, for example, considered to be ill-mannered to come late to a class or to arrive wearing galoshes.

For those interested in further independent study there are many subject clubs, which are conducted by professors. And papers read to these circles are often good enough to be published.

In spite of the thoroughness and seriousness of Soviet educational organisation, let no one imagine that the Soviet students are a solemn priggish body. On the contrary, as anyone who knows them well can tell, they have a great capacity for enjoyment and gaiety and a lively interest in life outside the university.

THE CURRICULUM

In addition to the subjects selected for specialisation, there are certain subjects which are compulsory throughout the whole of higher education, whether the speciality is arts or science. Socio-politics embraces (a) the Foundation of Marxism-Leninism, which is taken for two years, (b) Political Economy, and (c) Dialectical and Historical Materialism, each of which is taken for one year only. All students, whether in an Institute of Dramatic Art, an Institute of Foreign Language, a Department of Botany or of Economics, have to take these subjects. A foreign (European) language, which so far is English, German or French, and is taken for four out of the five years, is also compulsory. Physical and Military Training completes the list of compulsory subjects.

Since the war military training has been dropped for women students. For men, it is the pre-calling up training which is to make them familiar with small arms, anti-tank weapons, elementary tactics and strategy, and able to play their part either in a company or as an individual. To-day physical training predominates, the actual military exercises having greatly diminished. This subject is taken for two years.

For the first three years the course is a general one arising out of the speciality, and treats the particular subject selected from its historical and scientific aspects. The more serious specialisation, limited to the selected aspects of the broad subject begins with the fourth year, when a decrease in the number of additional subjects makes more serious study of the speciality possible.

In the first three years students are required to spend six hours a day in supervised work at lectures, seminars, consultations or in the laboratory. Lectures account for forty per cent to fifty per cent of all study time, while the individual and practical and seminar work takes up from fifty per cent to sixty per cent of the total study time. Attendance is checked, and absenteeism for no good reason will call forth a reprimand, and if persisted in, will lead to being sent down either for a period or permanently. The time spent weekly on

obligatory study diminishes with each year after the second, till in the final year there are whole days for individual work, either reading or in the laboratory or both.

The teaching methods have nothing unusual about them. First is the two hours' professorial lecture with a ten-minute break. The Professor indicates themes and recommends books. Seminars, which follow lectures, are very important, for here much discussion takes place on the work presented by the students. There are consultations with the tutor either individually or in twos or threes. Students have to present a paper each year on a piece of work that must be completed within that year.

Practical work in all the specialities is carried on in subject rooms, laboratories and workshops within the precincts of the university or institute. For an Arts' course this practical work may take the form of work in museums and archives: it may be the preparation of reports illustrated by charts and diagrams, or it may be language practice. Whatever it is, the object is always the same, to link up theory with practice and to work out the theory in practice.

The practice—production practice as it is called in Russian—for the subject is carried out at the actual place of work. For example for geology, archæology and history, students' expeditions are arranged for practical work. Students in an institute of drama will work in a theatre, while students in science or technical institutes or departments of universities will do their practice in the appropriate factory or enterprise. The length of production practice varies with the course. In institutes training specialists for industry, practice averages nineteen weeks over the whole course. Agricultural institutes with a five-year course require fifty-three weeks' practice, those with a four-year course demand forty weeks. Special medical institutes require sixteen weeks, while in universities eight weeks is the average practice period.

A half yearly examination and a sessional examination in the different groups of subjects taken each year are compulsory for all students. These examinations, which may more aptly be described as tests, decide the amount of a student's grant. Those who fail in these examinations after a second opportunity are sent down.

In the last half year of the course the student is free to concentrate on his diploma thesis for the state examination which completes the course. He is not examined in all the subjects he has studied, nor do all the examinations he takes involve written papers. The yearly

examinations are considered an adequate test for the more general aspects of the speciality. Oral examinations are compulsory at every stage for all examinable subjects.

The diploma received by the successful student states that he is fit to take up a post as a specialist but it does not confer a degree. A first-class diploma gives the holder preference for a post. Degrees, of which there are two, Candidate and Doctor, are given on the successful defence of a thesis, presented at the conclusion of post-graduate research.

The thesis is read in public and at any time announcements may be seen in the educational press to this effect. I have even seen advertisements in buses, stating that so and so was going to defend a thesis on such and such a theme at such and such a place for a Candidate or Doctorate. There is an official "Opponent", i.e., questioner, but anyone may attend. Generally, those members of the faculty concerned with the subject arrive in full force.

When the Aspirant or Candidate for a degree has concluded the reading of his thesis, not only the jury, the examiners, the official "opponent", but anyone in the audience may put questions, may challenge the validity of statements or conclusions, and of the authorities and sources cited. Only when all these have been dealt with satisfactorily in the opinion of the jury, will the degree be awarded. There is a famous case, which occurred some years ago, of a fourteen-year-old schoolboy, brilliant at history, being the cause of the failure of an Aspirant. The boy, by his questions, was able to prove many inaccuracies and wholly wrong assumptions.

Degrees are conferred by the Learned Council of a university or academy institute, and approved by the Ministry for Higher Education. There is a very critical attitude to universities and institutes. The country demands a great deal from its higher education institutions. It considers that those who have had the privilege of this education should be the leaders of the country in every sense, and should set a high standard in scholarship and citizenship.

Chapter Eight

THE TEACHING PROFESSION

It is probably true that in no country in the world is the teacher esteemed so highly by the whole people as in the Soviet Union. This arises partly from the Russian's natural respect for learning. In a large measure it is due to the propaganda carried on by the government on behalf of the teachers, and in equally large measure to-day to the teachers themselves. Ever since they came to power the Soviet leaders have, through the press, through official pronouncements and through the wireless, on every possible occasion, stressed the importance of the teacher. Without teachers there can be no education, without education there can be no rise in the standard of living such as the Soviets desire, no freeing of the people from want and insecurity.

Lenin, the revered of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, is quoted again and again on the importance and the responsibility of the teacher. And on the whole the teachers have responded to the nation's expectations, so that the community has come to believe what it has been told about the profession.

Many teachers have been elected as deputies to the Supreme Soviet, the All-Union Parliament, and more have been elected to the Republic Soviets. They serve on municipal and rural councils, through which they gain a continuous awareness of the problems of the people whose children are in their charge. Generally, they live in the district where they teach.

It is in the villages, however, in the *kishlaks* and *âouls* of the Asian lands, that the teacher stands out as the leading citizen, as guide, philosopher and friend. The teacher's house is the centre of progressive ideas, the unofficial advice bureau on every conceivable subject from crop rotation to naming the new baby. Where such a relationship has been established, neither the teacher's cottage nor the school will be short of their winter fuel. Neither the school nor

the teacher will lack that attention and help from the community which makes all the difference to the life of the school and the teacher.

State honours and awards are given to teachers for long and meritorious service. In 1945 nearly five thousand teachers received such recognition, being awarded various orders and titles.

A rural or city branch of the teachers unions, a trade union, a collective farm, a city or village council, will make a presentation to honour a teacher who has served well both the school and the community. And the national as well as the local press gives regular recognition to the good teacher.

Finally, and the importance of this will be generally recognised, there has been and will continue to be an inexhaustible demand for skilled work in every sphere of life. As far as monetary reward alone is concerned, more can be earned by Stakhanovite workers in the factory or mine or the many other professions, as is the case in other countries. The choice of the teaching profession is therefore voluntary, so that it is more and more tending to become a vocation, and in time it is to be presumed there will be no square pegs in round holes in the profession.

Salaries have increased with the increasing general wealth of the country. The tables (Appendix II) give the salaries fixed in August 1943. It is probable that the completion of the fourth Five-Year Plan will see another rise. Apart from the actual sums, the tables are of interest as showing the grading of salaries. University training, size of school and length of service are all taken into account. The salaries as given in the tables are the basic salaries. There are all kinds of additional payments. The pay is based on four hours teaching a day for those taking Classes I-IV and three hours teaching for Classes V-X and for Teaching Schools. Any additional teaching receives additional pay according to the scale for the grade. Any member of the staff who has been awarded the title of "Honoured Teacher", or who has a degree, receives an additional one hundred roubles a month.¹

Heads of Junior and Senior Secondary Schools and of Teaching Schools, and Instruction Supervisors, are paid additionally for the teaching they do in accordance with the scale for teachers of those subjects. The teaching they do may not exceed two hours per day.

¹ Money awards no longer accompany most state honours (1948).

The form teacher in Classes V-X is paid for that additional responsibility seventy-five roubles a month in the capitals and in Kharkov, and fifty roubles in rural areas. Teachers of Russian and foreign languages, literature and mathematics in Classes V-X and in Teaching Schools receive sixty roubles a month extra for marking written work.

Length of service receives much recognition. For example, unqualified teachers in the first four classes who have over fifteen years' teaching to their credit are put on the same scale as Grade I (qualified) teachers. Heads and Instruction Supervisors with five years' service in that capacity are given a ten per cent increase on the basic pay while those with ten years or more receive a twenty per cent increase.

The scale for specialist teachers, Heads and Instruction Supervisors with twenty-five years' work in their subjects is ten per cent higher than for those with ten years' teaching.

In spite of all efforts to prevent this there were accepted during the war teachers who had not completed the senior secondary school. The salary of such teachers in Classes I-IV is ten per cent below the scale for Grade II of their category.

There is a similar reduction for the specialist teacher who has not graduated and the art teacher who did not complete a secondary education.

In those primary schools where, owing to paucity of numbers, Heads have to do four hours' teaching a day, there is no extra remuneration.

Teachers in special schools for the physically and mentally defective receive a twenty-five per cent increase on the ordinary salary. Likewise in the schools in some remote districts in the Irkutsk province, in the Yakutsk Autonomous Republic and in some other northern national areas, the staff are compensated by a twenty per cent increase on the usual scale. There is a fifty per cent increase in salary for those working in schools beyond the Arctic Circle.

A few calculations will show that it is possible for the head of a senior secondary school to be receiving one thousand four hundred and twenty roubles per month, plus the payment for teaching.

Certain things have to be taken into account when considering the salaries for rural schools. In a village school the teacher receives free accommodation and fuel. Generally, a plot of land goes with the cottage. Almost invariably there will be a cow and some poultry.

THE TRAINING

The supply of teachers has never been able to keep pace with the demand in the Soviet Union, so rapid has been the expansion of education. For schools alone the number of pupils rose from less than eight million in 1914 to thirty-two million in 1940. It was held to be more important to have the children in school even with unqualified staffs than to put off education until such time as it was possible to open the necessary colleges to train the teachers. Whatever happened, a start had to be made to deal with that vast inheritance of illiteracy and to equip the young with at least the three R's as the essential foundation for future education. The policy has always been to get more and more children in school for an ever lengthening school life, until in 1940 compulsory universal education for all up to fifteen was achieved.

By 1936 supply was catching up with demand, and a decree was promulgated to the effect that all unqualified teachers who wished to remain in the service must pass the qualifying examination by 1938. This was never achieved, for the war loomed nearer and nearer on the Soviet horizon, and it would have been foolish to lose those teachers who might desperately be needed.

The destruction and devastation, and the losses in man-power suffered by the Soviet Union during the war, have made the problem of the supply of teachers more acute than it has been for many years. The measures adopted were varied. Education authorities were encouraged to adopt any reasonable methods that could temporarily solve this problem.

A national measure, widely used, is the special one-year course¹ at which students are accepted at almost any age provided they have completed the Senior Secondary general education. So great was the need that for a period students with only a Junior School education (seven to fifteen) were being accepted. In this case the students had to continue their general education so as to reach the senior secondary standard. The course is devoted in the main to education, methods, psychology and school practice. On completion the students enter either primary schools or the primary grade of secondary schools. They have to continue their studies in order to acquire both the academic and the professional standard of the teacher who has followed the normal course.

¹ This is not really comparable to the British Emergency Teachers' Training Scheme, which allows for an unusual degree of experimentation.

In many girls' schools, an additional class (XI) has been organised for girls who in Class X are interested in the profession. They go through a similar course to that cited above, doing their school practice in the school itself.

In a school in Kuibyshev Region, on the initiative of the Instruction Supervisor, the pupils in Class X were switched over from their ordinary curriculum to a course that would prepare them to take the younger children in the village schools.

A plan was drawn up for one hundred and twelve hours' study and training. The special lessons, given twice a week by the more experienced teachers in the schools, included basic Methods and Education, History, Nature Study, Geography and Arithmetic, and the methods of lesson presentation to a class. Pupils visited other schools and after some observation of lessons, themselves gave lessons.

All such measures were warmly welcomed by the teaching profession. In a great many cases the teachers themselves organised courses for the training of new teachers.

In Belorussia, one of the republics that suffered most from the enemy, five thousand teachers offered to work two shifts a day, that is, to do an eight hours' teaching day.

Teacher-training by correspondence was first started in 1920, and has continued ever since. The conditions of study are similar to those which obtain for any correspondence course.

These courses are run by the Institutes of Education, by the Teaching Institutes and the Teaching Schools, and, as might be expected, are more commonly patronised by the previously backward nationalities.

In the Kazakhstan Republic in Southern Asia, with its vast sandy wastes which Soviet Science has set out to make fruitful, correspondence courses have been organised at all Institutes of Education and Teaching Schools. In 1944 six thousand four hundred and eighty teachers qualified through these courses, becoming external graduates of different institutes, and seven thousand one hundred and thirty completed the course in Teaching Schools. In this republic, with its pre-1914 illiteracy of nearly ninety per cent, training by correspondence will play an important part for some years yet. The Kazakh Commissariat (now Ministry) of Education in 1944 set up a special department for Teacher Training Correspondence Courses and opened a special scientific bureau for research into this form of training. So much for emergency training.

NORMAL TRAINING

There are three types of Institutions which train teachers in normal times. The first two, Teaching Training Schools and Teaching Institutes, are in fact also temporary, since ultimately the third type, the Education Institute with the four-year course, will be universal. The war, however, has made this achievement more remote than it appeared to be in 1938.

In 1944, during the war, these teacher training schools were re-organised. There had been considerable criticism of their work and of the training they gave, much from their own students. I can do no better than give in English the regulations as approved by a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. on March 11th, 1944, abbreviated and edited. In January 1947 the course was lengthened to four years.

Section I

"The Teaching School is a State pedagogical institute of secondary grade academic standard, financed by the State and controlled by the Commissars (now Ministries) of Education of the R.S.F.S.R.¹

"The purpose of the Teaching School is to train able and skilful teachers for the primary school and primary grade of the secondary school.

"The course lasts three² years. All citizens between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five who have received a junior secondary education are accepted.

"Study and training must be in the native language.³

"To every Teaching School there is attached a primary school for practice.

"A Teaching School is to have hostel accommodation.

"A Teaching School is to have its auxiliary farm, and dining-rooms closed to outsiders."

The Teaching School is directly under the Province or Region Department of Education or of the Commissariat (Ministry) of Education of its Autonomous Republic, and in the towns of the republics it is under the City Department of Education.

¹ Other Republics are free to organise their training in their own way but because the R.S.F.S.R. was for years the leading republic, in actual practice there is close approximation in the way the institutions are organised.

² Now 4 years.

³ The R.S.F.S.R. comprises a number of autonomous republics, areas and national regions.

Section II

"The following subjects shall be in the curriculum of the Teaching Schools: Russian language and method, and method for arithmetic teaching, geography, nature-study, history, drawing, writing, singing, physical training and the method for each; literature and mathematics, the constitution of the U.S.S.R., physics, education, psychology, manual work in workshops and on the land. In the non-Russian Teaching Schools, native language, literature and method form part of the course.¹

"The syllabuses and time-tables of each must fit into the scheme of work as arranged for the Teaching Schools. (By the central authority.)

"School practice is compulsory. It shall consist of observation of lessons and of leisure activities, a test lesson, one day's teaching, and a two weeks' teaching period in a primary school or the primary grade of the secondary school.

"Students shall be taught to play on an instrument (piano, violin, etc.). The tuition shall be individual, after class, and have ten hours a week assigned to it. Tone-deaf students shall be excused."

The basic method employed in the Teaching School is the class lesson by the teacher (lecturer), strictly following the time-table. The methods used must be such as to help the students to master the subject with accuracy, make them active, develop habits of independent work and intellectual curiosity, and make them skilled in teaching practice.

The Teaching School must have subject rooms for the subjects listed above, a gymnasium, a shooting gallery, a plot of land for practical study and workshops for making teaching aids. There must also be a library and reading-room.

The school year begins on September 1st and ends June 20th. There is, in addition, two weeks' holiday in the winter, and one week in the spring.

There are six lessons of forty-five minutes each per day, seven in non-Russian Teaching Schools.

Examinations and marking follow the practice for the Senior Secondary School. The Principal must be a graduate with not less than ten years' teaching experience. The Principal makes the staff appointments with the exception of the vice-Principal who is

¹ For details see Appendix III, p. 180.

in both subjects. In History, the subjects in which papers are set are Ancient History and the History of the Middle Ages. In General Science-Geography, the subjects for examination are Vertebrate Zoology and Geography of the U.S.S.R., while in Physics-Mathematics they are elementary mathematics and general physics. There are internal examinations and tests in the other subjects.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES of which, in 1938-39 there were one hundred and ninety-three with one hundred and eleven thousand students, train teachers for Classes VIII-X inclusive, to specialise in one main subject. It is only in recent years that a subsidiary subject has been required. Many Educational Institutes have pre-School Departments for the training of Heads and Inspectors for Kindergartens. The Herzen Institute (see chapter VI, p. 70) has a department of Defectology for training specialists for schools for defectives.

The Institutes vary in their set-up, many having only three faculties: History, Russian Language and Literature, and Physics, Mathematics. The Lenin Education Institute in Moscow has faculties for History, Language and Literature, Physics-Mathematics (with separate courses in each of these last two subjects), General Science, Geography and Pedagogy, while the Municipal Education Institute in Moscow has in addition a faculty for Graphic Arts, and one for Foreign Languages (English, French, German). The Omsk Educational Institute has in addition to the usual faculties, two other departments, one for Geography and another for the Peoples of the North, which includes the study of the languages of these peoples.

The curriculum for these institutes may be divided into three sections (1) covering the socio-philosophical subjects, (2) the professional subjects, that is, those concerned with teaching, and (3) the subjects covering the selected specialisation. The first two are compulsory for all students, irrespective of specialisation, as is also a foreign language which is taken throughout the course until the final examination term. Physical training is also compulsory in the first two years.

The first section (compulsory) includes the Foundations of Marxism-Leninism and Political Economy. The course in Russian Language and Literature includes Historical and Dialectical Materialism.

The professional section includes: Psychology, Education, History of Education, School Hygiene and Methods.

Latin is compulsory for one year for a Language course which must also include the Russian Language. Every specialised course has a broad foundation. For example, both Russian and Geography require General History and the History of the U.S.S.R., while the History course requires general Literature and Russian Literature, and in itself history covers ancient history, the history of international relations and diplomacy. The fundamental specialisation, for a limited period, takes place in a post-graduate course, that is after the training has been completed.

The geography course includes the following subjects: astronomy, general physical geography, cartography and the elements of topography, illustrative drawing, geology, plant geography with the elements of botany, mineralogy and petrology, soil geography with the elements of soil science, animal geography with the elements of geology, physical geography of U.S.S.R., economic geography of U.S.S.R., world physical geography, economic and physical geography of foreign countries.

The General Science course cycle includes: physics (selected subjects), general and inorganic chemistry, analytical chemistry, organic and bio-chemistry, the elements of physical and colloidal chemistry, botany, plant physiology with the elements of microbiology, human and animal physiology, Darwinism and geology.

None of these subjects is taken throughout the whole four years of the course. Some are taken for one year only, others for two years. Only a foreign language is taken throughout. Nearly all subjects have an examination, written and oral, at the end of the year. In addition, there are half-yearly oral tests.

These academic courses would be equivalent to a degree course in an English University, while the professional course is the Soviet equivalent for the English one-year post-graduate course for teachers but more profound in each subject.

Among the themes included in the subject Education are: Education, its content and problems; the common core and the variety of basic conceptions of education; the philosophical foundations of education; education and instruction; comparative education; didactics and its principles; methods; moral training; problems of school and class organisation; out-of-school activities; the home and school, and so on.

School practice is taken in the third and fourth year and includes observation and learning the way about a school, helping with

out-of-school activities in the third year, and a month's continuous teaching in the fourth year.

Students are encouraged to join circles concerned with problems of education. Except for a Foreign Language course, in which there are only three subjects, the final State examination at the end of the course requires four subjects, of which two, the Foundations of Marxism-Leninism and Education (full cycles), are the same for all faculties.

For history, the examination requires History of the U.S.S.R., and a selected course in general history.

The institute has to organise a post-graduate course for the training of research workers. The candidates for this are graduates with a high attainment in their diploma work. In the three-year post-graduate course they work on a thesis on which they hope to receive their first degree—Candidate of Education. Here (as elsewhere in higher education) degrees are awarded only on a piece of post-graduate research.

FURTHER TRAINING

So much for the pre-teaching training. It is realised that no course, however well organised, can produce an experienced well-qualified teacher. The greater number of teachers continue their special training after they have taken up work. In Moscow and in other leading cities there are institutes for the improvement of teachers' qualifications.

These institutes generally offer a two-year evening course, dealing with both subject and method, the purpose being to raise the general educational level as well as the professional standard. The institutes are closely linked with schools where students study successful methods and approaches and gain experience. The information gathered by students in such schools is later made available by the Institute to the Education Authorities and to all teaching associations within their area.

Among the means adopted by these institutes for the raising of teachers' qualifications are courses of varying length and concentration to suit particular needs, seminars, conferences, discussion groups, exhibitions, actually helping the teachers in class, visits and publications. They are an integral part of the education system and are directly under the region or district Education Authority.

In Moscow, in addition to these institutes, there is a Central

Institute for raising the qualification of leading educational personnel. The tasks of this Institute are to study, analyse and make widely known the best educational practice, and to study the questions of inspection and administration of education. The Institute helps the education ministers of autonomous republics and the different Education Authorities as well as inspectors, for all of whom it arranges conferences, discussions, and exhibitions. Further it publishes instructions and bulletins. The usual form of study in this Institute is the two-monthly or the monthly course for regional and district inspectors.

Large administrative units of the U.S.S.R., are divided into districts, and a region may have anything from forty to seventy such districts. In each district centre—the town or large village—there is an Education Bureau attached to the district Education Authority with a full-time paid director and two or three paid assistants, who organise an active group of helpers from among the teachers in the neighbourhood. The chief rôle of a Bureau is to render daily help to the head and teacher in the school. The Bureaux are centres for discussion and exchange of experience. There is an exhibition, often quite small, with changing exhibits (the work of the teachers instructing in methods), visual aids, children's work of interest, anything in fact that will widen the teachers' horizon and give useful hints on improving their work. Handwork groups, subject groups and any activity that is demanded locally may be arranged by the Bureau.

The staff visit schools and give open demonstration lessons to which are invited teachers from other schools. Such lessons are always followed by discussion. In rural areas these bureaux are very modest buildings indeed—often only log constructions—but they are very much alive and always enlarging their activities.

Another way of improving teaching is through a Methods' Association, formed by a number of village schools. This method is of particular value in vast sparsely populated areas. The members meet on Saturday evenings or on Sundays for the exchange of teaching experience and for discussions. At these meetings they draw up the schools' plan of work for the next month, discuss the syllabuses for the period and give demonstration lessons. The staff of the district Education Bureau and the inspectors take part in the work of these associations, which are voluntary bodies of teachers filled with a desire to improve education.

Within the school itself the School Methods' Association and the Subject Commission make valuable contribution toward the improvement of teaching and education. At their meetings they discuss the syllabus, the planning and preparation of the lesson, education publications, and they exchange experiences. Sometimes the members will arrange for a course in their subject or in educational psychology and kindred subjects.

It is part of the duty of the Head of the school to see that the staff is continuing its training and education, and particularly to see that the unqualified complete the necessary course with the help of the various correspondence courses.

All this activity makes it obvious that Soviet Authorities consider there is much to be done to raise the teaching and the academic level of teachers to the standard desired—and this is high.

None of this continued training is compulsory; the desire to do one's job well and the force of public opinion are the operative factors here as in other countries. In every district, no doubt, will be found teachers who lack interest and do little once they have finished their training. These do not generally stay in the profession for many years. Both Heads and teachers can be, and are, dismissed for incompetence. Complaints about the school or the class may be made by the inspector, by another member of the staff, or by parents, though long before such complaints are made it becomes obvious from the behaviour of the pupils outside the school as well as in, from the examinations and tests, that something is wrong. Before any serious steps are taken every possible help will be given to such Head or teacher. When this fails the case is brought before the district or regional or central Education Authority. A careful enquiry follows, and when hopeless incompetence is proved against either the Head or the teacher, he or she is dismissed.

Should dismissed persons feel they have been unjustly treated they have the right to appeal to a court of justice, either as an individual or through their union.

THE TEACHERS' UNIONS

Three Unions cover the whole field of Education and comprise the Union of Pre-School Educationists, the Union of Primary and Secondary School Educationists, and the Union of Higher Educationists. All those who work in one of these educational fields, whether directly concerned like the teacher, or indirectly, like the

school doctor, the cook and the cleaners, belong to one Union.

Within each Union there are a great many professional associations, as those for history teachers, geography teachers and many others.

The tasks of the Unions are to look after the welfare of their members, including that of their children, and to raise the standard of education. The largest Union, of primary and secondary schools, has a daily paper which is a great force both in improving the welfare of teachers and in improving education.

Membership costs two per cent of the basic salary. As the Unions do not have to spend energy and money in bringing pressure to bear on the government for improvements, they can engage in more immediately fruitful activities.

In every city and in many rural centres there is a teachers' club. The best are magnificent places with provision for every kind of leisure activity, artistic, scientific, professional—provision for concerts and theatre shows and sports. The Unions from their funds pay the professional instructors for these activities.

They have their tourist centres in different parts of the country and organise a variety of holiday tours. Both by the sea and in the country they have holiday homes and sanatoria for their members at reduced rates, or free as an award for good teaching. The Unions run holiday homes and holiday camps for the long summer vacation for the members' children, and since the war, they have made themselves responsible for many orphan homes. It is the Unions, through funds put at their disposal, who pay the woman teacher her allowance for the three months' pregnancy leave, and who make contributions from their own funds for the extra expenses connected with pregnancy. Many education courses and conferences are run by the Unions, the great majority of whose officials are volunteers. The right to self-criticism, so widely exercised in the Soviet Union, and the right to recall or dismiss officials keeps these officials up to the mark, and prevent those at the top from losing touch with the rank and file.

Chapter Nine

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

EDUCATION, like industry, needs research to keep it alive. Denied research, it stagnates and becomes wholly inadequate to deal with social requirements. And research, in order to render full value, to be productive of new ideas and new inspiration, must be co-ordinated by a central body, and to some measure directed, making itself sensitive and responsive to needs as they emerge.

Because educational research deals with so many imponderables, because it is conditioned by the subjective element as well as by the objective desire for knowledge, and because it is so strongly influenced by environmental factors, it requires a vast army of research workers, over a vast and varied testing field, in order to produce truths that are of general fundamental importance and application. This applies particularly to research into psychology, which so far has not proved itself susceptible to the laboratory tests of physical or chemical experiments.

Both the need for research and the difficulties surrounding it have come to be understood in the Soviet Union. Experiment was encouraged—too much so at one time—from the very inception of the Soviet system of education.

For years there have been central and regional Educational Research Laboratories. A special Institute for Schools for the Nationalities was set up in Moscow to deal with education for the backward and non-Russian peoples.

The regional and city Methods' Bureau are centres for research and experiment, on an elementary level it is true, but their work provides material for research and experiment on a higher level. The Education Bureaux, which discuss education in its more general aspect, are similarly centres of research; and in numbers of schools, under the direction of the Instruction Supervisor, research and experiment are carried on. The importance of this activity on the elementary level lies in arousing intellectual curiosity among the

rank and file of teachers. It encourages and develops among teachers the enquiring mind without which education becomes a barren and arid work.

The activities of the Bureaux and Centres are co-ordinated and popularised through the education press and such periodicals as "Pre-School Education" (*Doshkolnaya Vospitanie*), "The Primary School" (*Nachalnaya Shkola*), "Soviet Pedagogy" (*Sovetskaya Pedagogika*), and other monthly education journals.

In 1936, to eliminate duplication and overlapping, several research establishments were combined to form the Central Schools Scientific Research Institute of the then Commissariat (now Ministry) of Education. This Institute¹ deals with the problems as they concern the school in its task of education, that is with method and content of subjects, presentation, organisation of learning and teaching, and similar important educational procedure.

There were eight subject departments in 1938; Russian Language and Literature, Mathematics, Physics, General Science, Chemistry, History, Geography. Others were being planned for Draughtsmanship, Foreign Language and Arts. Each department works on the content of the syllabus and of an individual lesson, and recommends the amount of new material that may usefully be given in one lesson. It studies the problem of visual aids, what kind are in fact useful, and what is their rôle in the lesson. Subject text-books for the pupils and manuals for the teacher also come within the scope of the Institute's activities.

At the head of each department is a highly qualified educationist, generally holding a professorship. He is assisted by educationists only slightly lower in the scale than himself. Departments accept as junior assistants teachers who in the process of their work may become excellent research workers.

There is close contact between the institute and the schools and teachers. Research work of the kind followed in the Schools Institute would lose most of its value if it had not continuous practical contact with the school. The Director of the Institute in 1938, Professor Vsesvyatsky, had been head of a school and was teaching botany to fifteen year olds; the assistant director was responsible master for Class X (seventeen-eighteen year olds) in

¹ In Britain the 1944 Education Act recognises educational research for Treasury grant and the National Foundation for Educational Research may be expected to provide the means for the development of similar research.

another school, where he also taught literature. The Institute believes that it can and must learn from the schools. The data on which its staff will work to produce results must be gathered in the schools, so that the study of teaching as it is practised in the school, plays an important part.

Any one problem may receive attention for a considerable period. Particular attention is paid to the study of successful teaching and to spreading the resulting information among the teaching profession through local and regional conferences. The institute members regularly meet the staffs of a group of schools within a radius of three to five kilometres. At these meetings they present new ideas and describe new methods; they receive and discuss reports of the teachers' own work, and opportunity is provided for discussion of educational theory, which is considered important.

Inexperienced Heads of schools receive help in the organisation and administration of a school—particularly in regard to its academic side. The regional Education Bureaux are also in close contact with the Institute and receive help and guidance from it.

A problem that was and still is receiving much attention is character training in schools. The experience of research workers in this field is published both for the specialist and in a popular form to reach both teachers and parents. As any problem in education or upbringing becomes topical, so the Institute brings out literature on the question, which through its contacts reaches every teacher. Guidance for the Instruction Supervisor and for the Inspector are other problems which are tackled.

For some time now the Institute has been giving serious attention to the non-Russian schools in the R.S.F.S.R. In addition to the task of bringing their education up to the level of the best Russian school there is the question of teaching Russian to these children, for whom it is a "foreign" language. It does not appear that this problem, the teaching of Russian in non-Russian schools, has been solved yet.

In 1939 the Schools' Institute organised the first scientific education conference for teachers in the R.S.F.S.R. Thirty-five papers were read by merited teachers and ten by members of the Institute's staff. Many and varied were the subjects discussed: "Fundamental problems of the struggle for good work in the school"; "teaching children to read and write intelligently"; "developing the habit of independent work through the mathematics lesson"; "developing

the thought process in the mathematics lesson"; "contact between learning and life"; "the school and family"; "oral methods in mathematics" were some of the subjects dealt with, problems with which teachers everywhere are concerned. Some of the papers were of so high a quality that on the recommendation of the then Commissariat of Education their authors received the degree of Candidate of Education.

It is interesting to note that the approach and methods used in the effort to obtain a good academic standard in all schools for all children as described at the conference, supported Soviet educationists in their rejection of the psychological theory of inherited inferior intelligence of large sections of children, as well as in their rejection of intelligence tests as a means of selection. The report of the conference states: "The speakers, teachers and educational scientists proved that every child, given the right educational approach, the proper planning of the lesson and of out-of-school activities, and close contact between the school and the home, will reach the pass standard. They showed that there are no limits to educational work with the children." We should note the inclusion of out-of-school activities, that is leisure, and the home.

In 1943, on the decision of the Council of People's Commissars, an Academy of Educational Science was organised. Its functions include research in the field of general education and in special education, in the history of education, in psychology, school hygiene and methods. They also include higher degree work to train personnel for the teaching of education and psychology in Education Institutes, Universities and Research Institutes. Its regular publications are "Sovietskaya Pedagogika" and "Academy Reports".

The Academy comprised the following sections on its formation; a research institute in the theory and history of education, a research institute in methods, a research institute for psychology, a research institute for the education of defectives, an education museum and an education library. As need arises, further institutes are set up.

The best educationists were assigned to the Academy and in its short life it has achieved a worthy record. Sessions are held regularly at which papers are read on the work done in one or other institute.

In June 1944, at a general meeting of the Academy, the plan for the academic year 1944-45 was discussed. It was agreed, that side by side with major research requiring long periods, there must be work on the practical day-to-day problems of the school.

The plan for research of the Institute of Psychology concentrated on problems of educational psychology and of child psychology in their bearing on the school. Some of the themes for research were "the psychological foundations for moral training", "the development of motives for activity in children," "the development of mental processes in school." A psychology laboratory was set up at a secondary school in which subjects studied were "will and character in types of children", "the rôle of the mental development in the formation of will and character," "the significance of emotion and the rôle of interest in its formation." The problems are described here not because they are unique to the U.S.S.R. but to show what is being considered.

The plan for the Methods' Institute was based on five central problems: the scientific determination of the content; amount of matter and preparation of major subjects; the place of text-books and visual aids; the principles of research training, that is methods and principles for research; and the history of the different subjects as taught in the schools. Research plans for other sections included such subjects as "theory and practice of physical training", "children's organisations in school." These were the plans on which the different institutes of the Academy set to work. At regular sessions, papers are read to each section, followed by considerable discussion.

A session held in September 1945 will give readers an idea of actual problems dealt with. The director of the Department of Education of the Institute of Educational Science belonging to the Ministry of Education in Georgia spoke on the need for a unified course in education for all Union republics. He considered the existing differing syllabuses and text-books inimical to a common high standard. He suggested that the education course for teacher-training should consist of the following sections: intellectual training, moral training, physical training, instruction in school, and the teacher. In addition there should be a section for didactics. He was very critical about the inadequacy of the attention paid to the subject of moral training. The reader will agree that there is nothing unusual here. The value of these discussions lies in the widespread stimulation of discussion and the resultant overhauling of education in the school. Further, he emphasised very strongly the importance of experimental education. It was essential to carry on experiments not only in educational psychology, but in problems of didactics,

and to be more daring in adopting the most varied methods. This indicates that Georgia at any rate is looking ahead to the time when the teacher will be good enough to need less centralised direction.

Another paper read to the Education Section, dealt with "formalistic knowledge in children and how to avoid it". There were many other papers dealing with the educational and psychological problems that confront teachers everywhere.

The section on Methods heard and discussed two main papers. The well-known educationist Obnorski dealt with "The Russian language", and Pankratova, the historian, with "Training political thinking in the history lesson". Other papers in this section dealt with such subjects as "Regional study in school", "Aesthetic training through literature", "Basic problems in planning a physics course in secondary schools," "Literature theory with senior forms," "Immediate problems in methods for mathematics," "Striving for a scientific standard in the teaching of biology and general science," "Classifying methods of foreign language teaching"—all problems common to the teaching profession the world over.

At some of the discussions over a hundred educationists of senior rank took part and a general desire was expressed that a number of the papers should be published in the educational press.

Professor Kornilov, the eminent psychologist and secretary of the Department of Psychology, reported that four main papers in his department were devoted to child and educational psychology. Smirnov, the director of the Institute of Psychology, read a paper on "The thought process and memory" based on a vast amount of experimental data, while a paper by Professor Shevaleyev dealt with "Thought processes in school work". Two hundred people discussed a paper on "The psychology of learning", so vitally important to every teacher in every school. Another interesting paper dealt with "The psychology of the individual approach to the pupil". The problem of the individual approach has been assuming an ever increasing importance in the Soviet Union. Many teachers attended the session and some made valuable contributions to the discussion.

The Academy of Educational Science is aware of the importance of research by teachers themselves in the process of their work. To this end a new scheme was planned in 1944 to organise "Pedagogical Forums", that is, sessions at which papers describing some piece of experimental or research work preferably carried out by the teacher in the school, and the conclusions derived therefrom, would be

read, and discussed by as wide an audience of educationists as possible, the sessions to begin in 1945 on the anniversary of the setting up of the Academy on October 6th. All those engaged in education in primary and secondary schools, in teacher-training schools and in institutes for improving teachers' qualifications were invited to take part in "The scientific study of problems in education, educational psychology, and methods of subject teaching".

A set of rules governing these "Pedagogical Forums" or Education Forums has been published and states that:

1. The problems dealt with at these sessions are those actual for schools: pedagogy, psychology and methods.
2. The sessions will be held once a year and will last two or three days.
3. Those engaged in education in whatever capacity have the right to present papers.
4. The themes set are those which arise out of the regular work of the Scientific Research Institutes of the Academy of Pedagogy.
5. The themes, with instructions, are brought to the notice of all those concerned through regional departments of education and autonomous ministries of education, and through the varied and extensive educational press.
6. Themes for papers may also be suggested by anyone taking part in the scheme.
7. A person having selected a theme informs the Academy and sends his plan for the work undertaken. A group of persons may work collectively on a theme.
8. The Academy's Institutes arrange consultations on the themes selected and give regular scientific supervision.
9. An examining board of seven, presided over by the Vice-President of the Academy reads and assesses the papers.

There are three money prizes awarded, two thousand roubles, one thousand roubles and five hundred roubles, first, second and third prize respectively. The money for prizes comes from the Academy's research fund. The prize-winners are invited to read their papers at the Sessions of the Academy in Moscow and the expenses of those living outside Moscow are borne by their Education Authorities. Papers which make a contribution to educational theory and practice will be published in the relevant journals.

The themes suggested for 1945 are not without interest. They are divided under two heads, Upbringing (*Vospitanie*) and Instruction.

Under the first heading, covering a problem acknowledged to be of vital importance in the Soviet Union, is included physical training at school and home; training a love for one's country in different age groups; training a sense of duty and honour in youth; training love for work; the right ways of work and behaviour; the training and instruction value of the school choir; co-operation between the responsible class-teacher and the Komsomol¹ organisation in the school. The significance of these suggestions lies not in the problems themselves, but in the decision by the country's leaders that there had been enough talk, enough of generalising and moralising, and that the problem of upbringing must now be dealt with practically, on the widest possible scale.

The heading Instruction includes the following subjects: reading as an extension of the lesson and as an art-form used as a weapon against formalistic knowledge with younger children; the use of fine literature in the development of the children's oral and written language; organising excursions and practical work in the secondary school; pupils' independent work at school and at home; system and methods of revision of past work when taking new sections of the syllabus.

The first Education Session or Forum was held on October 18th, 19th and 20th, 1945. Teachers from forty-seven regions responded to the Academy's invitation to conduct a piece of research, and over one hundred papers were sent in. Some of the problems were those suggested by the Academy, others were proposed by teachers themselves. Of the papers sent in, forty were chosen for publication and for discussion by a special jury of outstanding educationists. Those whose papers were rejected immediately set about working for the next Forum, in 1946. Eight teachers were awarded prizes.

The discussion following the papers brought to light considerable shortcomings in the work of the Academy's Institute of Teaching Methods.

There was a consensus of opinion at the end of the Forum on the great value of co-operation between the practising teacher and the theoreticians. It was considered to be of particular benefit to the theoretical educationists, while the teacher from remote districts returned from the capital enriched in experience and with a widened horizon, an experience very similar to that resulting from good conferences in any part of the world.

¹ Young Communist League.

In addition to the research carried on under the ægis of the Academy, research work has been done by Institutes of Education and Education Departments in Universities which, though diminished, did not stop because of the war. A record for research by these establishments during the war, includes thirty-one papers on general education subjects, thirteen on the history of education, five on pre-school education, four on education of the deaf, twenty-one papers on psychology and thirty papers on miscellaneous subjects.

The great value of the centralised research, with its threads reaching right down through the Education Bureaux and Methods' Associations to the remotest corners of the Union, is the comparative speed with which its results are made available to the rank and file of the teachers. Valuable work pursued in any school can be continued by teachers coming new to the school, and it is recorded for the benefit of others. In this respect the educational press plays an important part. Not only does it give reports of such work, but it is a forum for the ventilation of new ideas in the solution of old and new problems. Every issue of a periodical carries a serious article on some psychological and some educational problem.

The field for research is vast and the interest is growing, and there is no restriction on funds whenever it can be shown that a piece of research may prove to be valuable.

Chapter Ten

ADULT EDUCATION

A MOMENT'S reflection on the educational backwardness of tsarist Russia, with illiteracy ranging from seventy-two to ninety-nine per cent, will make the reader appreciate the magnitude of the task that faced the young Soviet State in its first years. The achievements are amazing, bearing in mind the shortage of everything; teachers, books, pencils and paper, accommodation, the economic difficulties with which the country had to cope in efforts to repair the damage of the 1914 war, of the civil war and intervention, and then to develop the Soviet Union into one of the foremost industrial powers.

Almost the whole population between eight and fifty years is now literate. But the authorities are not content to have "almost" the whole population literate, nor are they content with the bare mastery of reading and writing. Adult education up to the standard of the Junior Secondary School is of primary importance for all, for that is the necessary basis on which to build any further education projects.

The Education Authorities run primary and secondary schools for adults, the former being mostly in the villages. The aim is to have the curriculum and syllabuses parallel with that of the primary and secondary school for children, and one may find in rare cases children and parents, and most certainly children and grandparents, doing the same homework. The course for adults is an evening one, with attendance four times a week. Those who live too far away to attend in person—and they are many, take the course by correspondence. At regular intervals the correspondence students are visited by a member of the Correspondence School Staff, when group consultations are held. A student who finds the work particularly difficult may ask for individual help.

The importance attached to education by correspondence may be judged from a pamphlet of instructions and directions issued in 1944 by the Department for Adult Education of the then Com-

missariat of Education. The deputy Commissar for Education, Gavrilov, while praising the work done in this field by some Correspondence Secondary Schools, was severely critical of the majority of Local Education Authorities, many of whom had closed these schools during the war whilst others had paid little attention to them.

Thereupon he instructed the directors of Provincial and Regional Authorities and education commissars of the autonomous republics:

1. (a) To open in 1944, the city, province, region and republic Correspondence Secondary Schools closed during the war, and to provide the necessary accommodation and equipment.
- (b) To insist that directors of city and district Education Authorities give every help in organising consultations for the students, help with methods of setting tests during the year and with the end of year transfer examinations.
- (c) To supply these students with text-books, note-books, pens, etc., in the same proportion as supplies were made available to the ordinary secondary schools for children.

The Department of Adult Education was:

2. (a) To prepare a curriculum for these correspondence secondary schools bearing in mind war conditions.
- (b) To hold in March a seminar-conference for directors of Correspondence Schools on the organisation of such schools in war time.
- (c) By April 15th to have ready instructions on methods for Correspondence Schools.
3. The Education Publishing House was to print two thousand copies of these instructions.
4. The Statistics Department was to prepare record forms for Correspondence Schools.

To deal with the difficulties created by war conditions, Study-Consultation Centres were organised and are continuing their work to-day. Such a centre was to be set up in any district with not less than forty students attached to a school. Each centre has a Principal appointed by the Local Education Authority, usually the Head of the secondary school or the most experienced teacher, who selects his or her teacher-consultants. In each area there is a central Study-Consultation Centre, presided over by the Principal or Instruction Supervisor of the Correspondence School, to which it is attached.

The purpose of these centres is to provide both group and individual consultation for students.

To ensure the systematic supervision of the centre by the school, close contact is established between the two through conferences arranged for centre principals and teachers, through regular inspection, through personal visits to advise and help, and, when necessary, through correspondence. The Correspondence School supplies the centre with the specialist literature required for the work, and it supplies the students with their text-books. Where there is no Study Consultation Centre in their neighbourhood, students are attached to the nearest one.

In cases where an applicant to a Correspondence Secondary School¹ has either missed some of the earlier stages or has had an interval of several years with no education and the entrance test shows him below the required standard, the necessary individual tuition may be arranged to help him fill the gap.

There is a time-table for the work which is generally adhered to. Eight hours a week is given to group and individual consultation in Classes V-VII and six hours a week in Classes VIII-X with a group of thirty pupils. In addition there is a weekly ten hours for each class for oral reports of work and set written work. In outlying study-consultation centres the recommended number for a group is ten to fifteen, with group consultation, which means less time is available for individual consultation.

The Correspondence School popularises its work through advertisements in the press, through the wireless, and by means of circulars to factories and works.

To avoid sketchiness, the result of too many subjects taken in the time available, subjects are arranged in cycles, each cycle for half a year. As with all correspondence courses, most of the work has to be done by the student himself. The instructions go into careful detail of methods, of the content of lessons, of revision and testing and marking. Much importance is attached to the way the theme for work at home is formulated.

The structure of the Correspondence Secondary School is fairly uniform for the country.

For five hundred or more correspondence students the Principal of the school is allowed an assistant-director to deal with instruction. Any Province, Region or Republic with five or more Study-Con-

¹ Secondary School here is Class V to X, normally twelve to seventeen years.

sultation Centres, may have a special methods-instructor for their supervision. Consultants are appointed from the more experienced teachers of the normal secondary schools. A Correspondence Secondary School must have in addition to the teaching staff, a librarian-secretary, a typist and a book-keeper; the staffing of each school is confirmed by the States Commission.

Much has to be done to ensure a high standard of success in this work and the school staffs were recommended to carry out research and investigation on such problems as methods, setting home-work, content and method of group and individual consultation, methods of assessing set work, testing knowledge, and so on. Those engaged in correspondence departments in institutes and universities and elsewhere have been asked to help with these problems. The Correspondence Secondary Schools are wholly financed from the education budget. Special funds are assigned for text-books, note-books and anything required by the students. The accommodation for consultations is generally provided by the ordinary secondary school.

Thus a Soviet Correspondence School is an institution which in a great measure is expected to continue its own professional education in order to achieve success in its work. To repeat, it is under direct control of the Education Authority, it must submit to inspection and it is open to challenge and criticism. Complaints by students must be dealt with swiftly, and if no satisfaction is received from the Correspondence School, the student can take his complaint to the Education Authority.

A great task has been assigned to them, that of providing some millions of adults living scattered over the vastness of the Soviet Union, remote from centres of education, with a full secondary education.

THE ADULT SECONDARY SCHOOL (as distinct from a Correspondence School) is equipped with science laboratories and subject rooms. There is generally a good library where the student can borrow text-books which have been specially written for adults. A reading-room open all day till late at night is at the disposal of the students, with a teacher on duty who is ready to help with any difficulty. In 1944 there were roughly ten thousand adult secondary schools in the U.S.S.R. with an attendance of one and a half million manual workers, office employees, peasants. Moscow had eighty-five such schools.

These secondary school courses have many pupils in their early twenties who become absorbed in their education, who discover that their great interest in life is in reality physics or chemistry, engineering or literature, history or geography. Such pupils can take the matriculation examination, taken in the last year of the normal Senior School. If they reach the required standard they will be accepted in a higher education institute or university. There are in addition special courses for preparation for university entrance. These are evening courses attended by manual workers, clerical workers and peasants, who during the course of their work or through their leisure activities develop an interest in some particular subject such as medicine, or history, or economics, or law, and would like to specialise in that subject. Students who complete the preparatory course successfully and pass the university entrance examination are accepted up to thirty-five years of age. The demand for the specialist in every sphere of activity is inexhaustible. "Personnel (cadres) are the lynch pin of a country" Stalin said many years ago in addressing a conference on the training of specialists. The specialist must have theoretical as well as practical training. He cannot understand the full implications and significance of his job if he has only learnt it on the job, so it is argued in the Soviet Union. Hence the vast and increasing facilities for higher education for those already at work.

In all urban centres there are workers' Evening Universities, where courses are followed parallel with those in the day universities. These are organised by the Education Authority or more often by the particular industrial ministry, trust, economic or administrative body or agricultural ministry that requires these specialists.

In very many cases before the war the buildings for evening universities were only used for that purpose. They are equipped with study rooms, laboratories, a library and reading-room with a full-time staff. The course is a five-year course and students are given time off with pay by their employing body for the examination periods—which may be as long as three or four weeks. In the final year they are given three months' leave to complete the course. Very many brilliant technicians and leaders in other fields have come from these evening universities.

INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACADEMIES are full-time five-year courses run by the Government. The students in these institutes are men and women of industrial and agricultural

experience who have shown ability to plan and organise and who have initiative, originality and forethought. They have already risen to important positions in their particular job, but they have had no opportunity for theoretical studies nor the wider studies that impinge on their particular job. They are generally Stakhanovites.

Such people are released from work for five years and sent to one of the Industrial or Agricultural Academies at no cost whatever to themselves. Where there are dependents, a wife or children, or both, and there nearly always are, a grant is made to the family so that the student can give his or her whole attention to his studies.

Like all adult university courses these include in addition to the speciality the socio-political subjects and Russian language and literature. History, both general and as it relates to the special subject, is taken. As these students on completion of the course will become executives, directors of a coal trust, a clothing trust, a food trust or other similar body, economics and administration have an important place in the curriculum.

All courses for higher education for adults, except the last mentioned, have their counterpart in correspondence courses. For many years to come this provision will be of great importance both in the training of specialists and in giving a general cultural education. There is now an institute which is carrying on research into education through correspondence courses. Every university and institute has its department for correspondence courses and they are available for an ever-widening field of activity.

In addition to the Education Authorities and trusts, higher education courses are organised by the trade and professional unions and by the Consumer Co-operatives for their own staffs. Indeed one might say that the trade and professional unions in the U.S.S.R. spend as much of their income, if not more, on education as on any of their activities.

While the number that takes a four or five-year course is considerable, the greater number of adults take shorter courses, and not wholly to improve themselves as workers. Chiefly they take the course just to improve themselves as people, to give the fuller and richer content to life which knowledge and the ability to appreciate the great cultural heritage of mankind make possible.

In this general adult education every one takes a hand, from the village teacher to the Academy of Sciences. While much is provided by central authorities and bodies, much equally is provided by the

people themselves. This is particularly true of the rural areas, where the adult education provided by the village Soviets and the collective farm management covers everything from teaching the alphabet to illiterates to courses on international problems, not forgetting the research and experiment in cottage laboratories. As an example of this local activity we may take the Senior Secondary School in Khabarovsk. Strictly speaking Khabarovsk is far from rural, but it is remote, much of its population hailing from the country and, in 1942, it still had a problem of illiteracy. Serafima Feodorovna Pervoushina, the Russian language and literature mistress in the school, decided that something must be done about this problem. She organised a band of "soldiers of culture" (*Koultarmeitsi* in Russian) volunteers from the school and gave them the task of conquering illiteracy. Serafima Feodorovna held regular collective discussions with her young assistants on the methods which would ensure greater success in their work, and put herself also at the service of individual "teachers". The youngest of these, fourteen year old Tolya Kouryakin came to her one day to find out whether the notes were taken properly and to ask for guidance in marking the work. His pupil, forty year old Popova, had begun to read and write and even to do simple sums, as could be seen from the exercise-books Tolya had brought with him.

In that year, 1942, the pupils' education army was teaching sixty-five adults. Within six months many of these adults had learnt to read and write and calculate. And they were very grateful, these adult pupils, whom life had hitherto denied the key that opens so many doors.

This is by no means an isolated case. Though the army of adult educationists has multiplied, it is still not big enough to reach every corner of the Union, and the young, guided by their own teachers, still teach the older generation.

The centre of education in the village is literally translated, the *Reading Hut*. It is generally built of logs and often thatched. Often it is quite commodious and may have two or even three large rooms. The superintendent (or *Izbahch* in Russian) is the fountain-head of culture, and the success of adult education in a village or district depends on this superintendent. Here again the position is generally held by a woman, who may or may not have an assistant, but if she is any good she will certainly have a group of very active volunteers. An essential part of the Reading Hut is the library from which books

may be borrowed. Both the borrowing and return of a book are occasions for discussion with the superintendent or assistant.

In the evenings the Reading Hut is a busy hive. At the information counter people come with a host of questions: how to obtain the family allowance and what is the latest in plant-breeding and what to do for dysentery. The information counter, in fact, is very like the Citizens' Advice Bureau in England.

In the large room lectures are delivered either singly or as part of a course on a variety of topics, related and unrelated to their work. Conferences and discussions are held for the more serious consideration of topics. On other evenings there is reading aloud of newspapers, journals or books by the superintendent or assistant followed by discussion. Afternoon readings are organised for women who cannot leave home in the evenings. The Reading Hut will also serve as the centre for amateur activities, music, dramatics, etc. It has very definitely an educational character. The villagers go to the Reading Hut to learn and to study. In 1939 there was a great drive to ensure a Reading Hut in every village. By 1941 this had been almost achieved when the Germans arrived and set about destroying all educational centres. They have now become an essential priority in the rebuilding plans.

Next in importance and scope to the Reading Huts come the Houses of Culture, clubs for adult education and amateur activities. So great is their importance that in June 1945, the then Council of Peoples Commissars (now Ministers) of the R.S.F.S.R. set up a central committee¹ for Cultural-Education establishments. This committee has taken over direction not only of Houses of Culture but of clubs generally, of libraries, museums and Parks of Culture and Rest.

Well-run, successful collective farms will boast of their fine Houses of Culture which will have children's departments, so that mother and father may together participate in some activity and the children be busy and active, in the care of a qualified adult.

When Tatyana Zuyeva was appointed chairman of the new central committee she said: "One of our most urgent tasks is to increase the number of clubs and local Houses of Culture. In the next two or three years we intend that every rural Council shall have a well-built club and every district centre a House of Culture, well stocked with musical instruments, theatrical properties and literature. More than

¹ This is now a ministry with Zuyeva as the minister.

eight and a half million books have already been sent to the State Book Fund to restock the four thousand five hundred libraries that were destroyed under German occupation."

In the cities there are Houses of Culture—some of them with hostels attached—for collective farmers who come to town for conferences or visits. These provide for every need. A library has books on many subjects and a permanent exhibition, with guides qualified in the subjects, deals with agricultural matters. Lectures are given by eminent men and women. Civilised amenities are much in evidence and play an important educative rôle.

In the cities too are found Palaces of Culture and Trade Union Clubs, many of which could aptly be described as palaces. These are supported by trusts, factories, individually or in combination, and by trade and professional unions. All clubs, whether they belong to the Musicians Union, Writers Union, Intellectual Workers or to a factory, carry on both academic and general cultural activities. This applies equally to Soviet Army Clubs. In addition to the theatre, gymnasium, and amateur activity rooms for such activities as dramatics, music, dancing, embroidery or needlework, there are study rooms for academic subjects, mathematics, language, sciences; there are exceedingly well-stocked libraries and reading-rooms for independent work, where a qualified person is in attendance to give any information required. All these clubs, including the Soviet Army Clubs, have children's sections.

In addition to these facilities for adult education there is the comparatively recent but very popular institution of "Sunday Universities". In a limited way they existed before the revolution. They provide courses of varying length of a fairly high academic standard, which adults attend on Sundays. They are becoming more and more popular.

Lecture Bureaux for the organisation of single lectures or courses exist in all cities and rural district centres. These are generally run by the local councils. Universities themselves will organise lectures in their buildings, again either singly or as a course, on subjects in which the people are interested. Most of this provision for adults is entirely free. Where fees are charged, as they may be for courses arranged by the Lecture Bureaux, they are very small.

The Moscow University Lecture Bureau has an annual attendance of one hundred and sixty thousand students who take courses on such subjects as ancient history, mediæval or modern history, the

atomic nucleus; the history of world culture embracing such themes as *Ancient Egypt*, *Ancient Mythology* and a very popular course is entitled Greek literary giants—Homer, Sophocles and Aeschylus. A course entitled “The Middle Ages and Renaissance” covers Dante, Boccaccio, Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo.

A great contribution to adult education is made by libraries, which again are even more important in rural districts than in cities where facilities are so much more varied and easily available. A library, particularly in a village, is much more than a centre for distributing books. It is a place where information on any question may be obtained, where studies can be carried on in the reference rooms or reading rooms and where lectures and courses of study are arranged. These services, increasingly available in rural centres, are particularly fruitful where the librarian is enthusiastic and intelligent. A typically well-run rural library is that of the townlet Koubeno-Ozero, the district centre in the Vologda Region. The accommodation consists of two large rooms in a spick and span condition. No ancient yellowing notices or posters are allowed to offend the eye, no accumulations of out of date unwanted useless material. Books are doctored at the first sign of sickness and a band of book-lovers renders first-aid. The well-stocked library can provide information on any subject, whether on the rights of motherhood, on the civil war or military campaigns, or on any technical subjects. The demand for literature dealing with agriculture grows daily.

The library has a travelling department which takes books to the villages in the region. The librarian, Valentina Martynova Loukina, and her two assistants are aided by volunteers. Youngsters offer their services to collect books that are overdue. Others deliver books to out-lying cottages. Loukina herself with books under her arm visits the collective farms in whose homes she is a welcome guest. Both she and her assistants visit the small co-operatives to talk about books and affairs. In her library they keep a record of the questions brought by readers, and the subjects in which they are interested, and there is the usual suggestions book.

The readers' conferences are very popular; one hundred and fifty took part in a discussion on Ketlinsky's book *Courage* and a larger number discussed Alexei Tolstoy's *Bread*. Conferences on the new varieties of grain, vegetables and fruits which are being acclimatised in the north, are of very great interest to the inhabitants. Such

conferences touch on history, geography, biology, botany, soil science, agricultural engineering,—sufficient to provide many courses.

Travelling libraries are in very wide use. They are not merely distributing agents. A motor-bus library designed by students of the Moscow State Libraries' Institute carries five thousand books. It has three compartments, one for catalogues, another with shelves for two thousand volumes with the librarian's table at which books are exchanged and information and advice given, and the third houses a portable library of five hundred books with folding tables and chairs for readers. This can be set down in any field in any village, or set up in any room available. These travelling libraries are eagerly awaited in the country and serve as a link between town and country.

Museums, like libraries, play their part in adult education. The Russians are past masters in the art of arranging museums to be truly educational. It is a common practice for parties from factories and farms to visit museums in the nearest towns and to be taken round by lecturer-guides, and this applies to every kind of museum, whether it is one dealing with Mother and Child Care, or the ethnography of a district, or art or sculpture. The museums will run circles for those particularly interested in their subjects or on any one aspect. A lecture organisation for the provision of lectures, courses and conferences is part of the museum service. Regional museums do much to interest the population in the history, geography and economics of their region.

The Parks of Culture and Rest are further centres of adult education. Owing to the great heat of the summer months, little educational activity can be carried on indoors, for the people will not stay there. Education is therefore taken to the people out of doors. These Parks of Culture and Rest, in addition to offering a variety of facilities for amusement, offer opportunities for education. Many visitors have seen a group of adults in one of these parks round a map or a blackboard. A lecturer, often eminent in his sphere, is giving an open-air lecture or merely answering questions put by the onlookers. In open-air halls ordinary lectures may be in progress. Open-air art classes are held for those interested, and readers may borrow books from the libraries and read them in the park.

One should not forget to include the Cinema and the Theatre as channels for adult education. The cinema particularly lends itself

to education in history, geography, archæology—all the sciences in fact—and is thus used.

A very powerful force in adult education is the press and its publications. Both the daily press and the periodicals carry articles that may justifiably be described as educational. No anniversary of a great man whether he belonged to Great Russia or one of the many other nationalities, to the countries outside Russia or to the Soviet epoch, whether he be scientist, writer, musician or philosopher, is allowed to pass without a serious article on the man and his work appearing in both the national and the local press, and in very many of the specialised papers and periodicals. Soviet newspapers carry short stories and poems as a regular feature.

There are periodicals dedicated to every phase of man's activity. They all treat their readers with respect whether it is the monthly *The Peasant Woman*, or *The Theatre*, or a scientific journal. There is an increasing number of popular illustrated journals for the education of the adult. A recent one, *Soviet Woman* is a production of high quality both technically and as regards the contents. *The Woman Worker* now in its twenty-second year has kept up its standard and its habit of treating its women readers as intelligent beings.

The publication of books has reached colossal figures. They are produced at a price within the reach of everyone. That is obvious from the speed with which an edition of two or three hundred thousand can disappear.

The Soviet authorities are far from content with the achievements in the field of adult education. There is criticism of failures and research into improved methods and facilities, for their aim is a highly educated people, which shall comprise the whole of the population.

Chapter Eleven

CHILDREN'S LEISURE

IN the Soviet Union they long ago decided that the child's leisure is as much the concern of educationists and education authorities as the child's school.

The ministries of education of the different republics each have their departments for Out-of-School Activities, and the local education authorities follow suit. In the education budgets, both centrally and locally, provision for out-of-school activities has its place. The educational plans, five-year and lesser periods, have their sections for Out-of-School Activities as thoroughly planned as any other sections.

In the larger cities there are institutions known as a Central House for the Arts Education of Children. Here there is carried on research into varied leisure activities, including music, art, drama and handicrafts. Both content and method of presentation are studied. Children's songs, children's plays to be performed by them, dances and games form the subjects of discussion and study. Groups of children carry on their activities either within the house or in a club attached to it so that scientific observation can be carried on.

In these institutions also are trained the leaders and instructors of these leisure activities, particularly the leaders of youth organisations.

A Central House for the Arts Education of Children is what its name implies, the centre for arts activities for a large district to whom it gives guidance and direction. Its responsibilities include planning courses and conferences, both centrally and locally, for those engaged in this field of work; publishing song sheets, games, plays, dances; issuing instruction leaflets. There is an extensive postal activity, much advice and help being given by correspondence. Some Institutes for Improving Teachers' Qualifications run special courses for out-of-school activities. While by far the greater part of the out-of-school activities is financed from the education budgets,

considerable contributions are made by professional and trade unions, by factories and collective farms.

SCHOOL LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Every school has clubs, or circles as they are known in the Soviet Union. Their number and quality, as will be expected, depends on the interest of the staff in this work. Since this activity is carried on within the school for its own pupils, whether the staff takes any personal part in a circle or not, it must have some relation to it. In fact teachers are expected to show interest in the work of the circles and to encourage them. Since the war, owing to the great shortage of personnel, very many teachers have taken on out-of-school duties. There is no doubt however that the practice of having special instructors for the leisure activities within the school will return in full, an arrangement which of course does not preclude teachers from doing such work in addition to their own if they desire it. Music, dancing and drama are very popular circles; literature, science, photography and construction all have their devotees. The war stimulated the opening of school workshops as a leisure activity. All kinds of work from cobbling to making dolls and toys for the children whose fathers were in the forces, flashes for army uniforms, and rebinding worn text-books was carried on. It has given a great fillip to handwork, which, with the change in polytechnisation, disappeared for very many children. These workshops are likely to remain a permanent feature of leisure provision.

Instructions on how to run a circle, how to plan the work for a subject, with actual syllabuses to be covered in a period, are issued regularly. These plans and syllabuses are correlated to the work in the class-room, and there is consultation and co-operation between the class teacher and the circle instructor or leader.

The truly creative leisure activity in the circle is planned to extend and deepen the knowledge given in the class-room and when possible to help broaden the subject studied. For example, a physics circle will often make apparatus that is valuable for the physics lesson. And when a piece of apparatus has been found useful it will be made in a number of sets.

The art circle may contribute to the history or geography lessons, while the literature and drama circles can contribute not only to literature but to almost every subject. School circles are attended once or twice a week.

Outside the school there is vast and varied provision for leisure education. First come the Pioneer Palaces, so named because they were originally intended for members of the youth organisation known as the Young Pioneers. Since about ninety per cent of youngsters are members of this organisation, exclusions would have been few even had this original intention been generally carried out. It was the rule for some time in the Kharkov Pioneer Palace. To-day, however, membership of these youth clubs is open to all between the ages of seven and eighteen years. Some have open days to which all the children in the neighbourhood are invited in order to interest them in the clubs.

In addition to the Pioneer Palace, cities like Moscow have district Pioneer Houses. It already had seventeen of these in 1938. To call the central youth clubs palaces is no mere flamboyancy. Some of them, like the Leningrad Pioneer Palace, were imperial palaces, others newly built in the last twenty years have the generous accommodation, decoration and equipment with which the word palace is associated in the minds of many.

A Pioneer Palace will generally be divided into two sections, the arts and the sciences, both terms used in the widest possible application. A Pioneer Palace being very much a place of cultural education, a place where standards of values are imbibed, much attention is paid to lay-out and decoration. There is nothing shabby, makeshift, dingy or dreary about a Pioneer Palace. Wall decorations, curtains, carpets, furniture, sculpture in an entrance hall, are all designed to make children feel at home *in civilised surroundings*. The aim is to make the youngster feel that beautiful surroundings are an essential part of everyday life.

The staff comprises a director and assistant, an educationist, a bursar and other office staff and instructors. The latter very often are highly qualified in their own sphere, as for example well-known chemists, engineering professors, musicians and artists and ballet mistresses. All instructors are entitled to pay, but many a professor or artist gives his time voluntarily. The staff has its council and its meetings to deal with questions as they arise. Pioneer Palaces have their plans of work and each circle has its own particular programme. Courses of activity and syllabuses of work are issued here too.

On the many occasions when I visited Pioneer Palaces or Pioneer Houses I was never conscious that discipline was a problem. Mostly it is in the hands of the Pioneers' Committee elected by the Pioneers.

Members are elected to the position of prefect and an armband appears to provide considerable authority. Each circle has its young chairman and secretary who help the circle instructor or leader. Boys and girls who wish to become members of a Pioneer Palace are given a fortnight in which to decide on the circle they wish to join. Once having made the decision it is expected they will remain in that circle for at least a year.

A Pioneer Palace provides for every conceivable kind of creative activity. The one in Leningrad may now be taken as typical for the large cities for, in the ten years prior to the war, cities like Tashkent, Alma-Ata, Ashkhabad, Tbilisi and many others vied with Leningrad in this respect. In the Leningrad Pioneer Palace there is a very beautifully proportioned hall for ball-room dancing and concerts, and a large hall which can serve both as a theatre and cinema. Music rooms for choral and orchestral work and for individual tuition, a lecture room holding about one hundred and fifty, for courses of lectures or single events on any topic, games rooms, a fine library and a reading-room, art rooms for painting and modelling, are all part of the arts side.

On the science side the visitor will find a railway-room, a naval engineering-room, an aircraft construction-room, all large and excellently equipped, a chess-room, a radio-room, photography-room, small rooms for an arctic exploration circle, and so on.

For the younger children a charmingly decorated story-room has been provided, as well as rooms for all kinds of handwork, in addition to the other arts activities.

Odessa being a port, the Pioneer Palace there showed distinctly nautical influence in its architecture and activities. In every city a Pioneer Palace expresses its own particular environment and tradition.

A Pioneer House may be very modest, half-a-dozen rooms or even less, to satisfy the most common demands of the children in the district. A Pioneer House will also have a director in charge and specialists will instruct in the various activities.

Technical Stations, that is clubs for boys and girls with a strong inventive or constructional bent, are also popular, and are organised both centrally and locally, the central ones guiding the activities in a considerable area. These are much encouraged, because they help make Soviet boys and girls mechanically minded. As far as the youngsters are concerned though, they provide satisfying facilities for the

urge to make things and to see "how it will work". Some of the central stations carry on interesting research into the best forms of such activities and the best methods of teaching; all issue instructions to those not very experienced who are carrying on such work in remote places. From time to time conferences are arranged at a central station to which men and women will come from isolated rural areas.

There is every encouragement to the mechanically-minded boys and girls to develop original thinking and an original approach. Every idea submitted is considered; whenever it appears practical a blue-print is made and construction begins, in the course of which much is learnt under expert guidance. Incidentally the activity in these stations is very valuable to the teacher of mathematics and science.

Young Naturalist Stations are another educational provision for leisure, and give immense satisfaction to boys and girls interested in living things. As in other fields, the organisation is both central and local, and the same help and guidance through preparation of courses and syllabuses and the publication of instruction leaflets, is provided. The central Young Naturalist Stations have in addition a vast correspondence with young naturalists over the whole Union, youngsters who may be hundreds of miles from the nearest naturalist station. The work at the stations is very closely linked up with the nature work in the school, and a station may be responsible for providing the specimens for nature lessons, for botany and for the nature corner in the junior class-rooms.

A central Young Naturalist Station is an estate of considerable size, with a director at its head, permanent plant breeding experts and visiting botanists, chemists and zoologists. There are laboratories for the necessary experiments with plants and soils. A writer of a science text-book, a professor, used his work with the children here as a basis for his book. Out in the fields, under expert guidance, profound and exciting experiments in plant breeding are carried out. Grafting, special feeding, fertilisation, are the means used to produce new varieties. In 1938, in the Moscow Young Naturalist Station, they had produced plants which were growing potatoes underground and tomatoes above ground! Hothouse culture of citrous fruits may be another activity in the more northern latitudes. Experiments in feeding animals, domesticating animals, experiments with egg-laying as well as bird study are carried on, though to a less degree than plant breeding.

Regional surveying may be carried on during a summer holiday. The labelling, classification and arranging of exhibits that follows after return is immensely valuable activity, exercising as it does powers of observation and accuracy. And the organisation of the material finally in show cases into a miniature museum is scientific to training of a high value. A most important result of field activity is the psychological satisfaction derived from it by the child.

In the different zoological gardens there are circles for animal lovers, where again under expert scientific guidance the particular boys and girls interested in biology can express their individual personality through the study of animals, their habits, and their care—for they are allowed to help keepers. In other places such as museums, as for instance in the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, there will be circles for boys and girls interested in a particular epoch, civilisation or people.

Another form of leisure activity, quite definitely educational, is the children's railway and the children's fleet. In 1940 there were twelve children's railways run entirely by boys and girls, again under instruction, this time of a railway engineer. Since the war those that were destroyed by the Germans have been restored and some new ones added. The carriages are large enough to accommodate boys and girls—and even an adult if he is so fortunate as to be invited. The engine driver and firemen, the guards, linesmen, signalmen, ticket collectors and any other staff are boys and girls, usually between the ages of eleven and seventeen. To run one of these railways successfully demands considerable training, the foundations of which are the class lessons, and considerable self-discipline and organisational ability.

Close to some of the ports, both sea and river, there are children's fleets, sailing and motor craft, again manned by boys and girls under expert guidance. The railways and the fleets are used mostly in the holidays and on the weekly holiday.

Sport receives considerable attention as a leisure activity. In 1943 there was founded the School Sports Association known as SMENA with membership fees (very small) and rules, for the encouragement of sport. For those who are particularly interested in sport there are a number of special sports schools, which they can attend in their free time. The sports circles are staffed with trained instructors and sports grounds and gear are available. In the larger cities there are special children's sports stadiums, and along rivers

there are special sections set aside for children for sports activities which include not only rowing, diving and swimming but also water polo.

It is impossible to give a completely exhaustive list of all the leisure provision and of all facilities for creative self-expression, because any body of people, any institution may organise a club of some kind where the need is obvious. Once organised, it will be linked up with some central organisation for guidance and advice.

Activity on the part of boys and girls is one side of this out-of-school education. The other side is the professional presentation of drama, music, art and cinema. For it is as important to provide the opportunity for the appreciation of the best and most mature art as for self-expression within the limits of youthful ability and experience.

A Soviet law prohibits boys and girls under sixteen years of age from attending adult cinema or theatre performances in the evenings. It is not difficult to keep this law since the authorities provide their own theatres and cinemas for youth. In 1940 there were ninety such professional theatres in the Soviet Union. In Moscow there were five such theatres, and in Leningrad two. In addition, Leningrad had a regional children's theatre with two companies which took plays to the children of the Leningrad region, and to hamlets beyond the Arctic Circle. Some Moscow theatres had touring companies which travelled south and east, particularly during the summer holidays. Some of the theatres have their own schools for training both actors and producers. They vary in size from the considerable First Children's Theatre in Moscow to a comparatively small one—three hundred or so children in Leningrad.

The companies are excellently trained permanent professional ones. A children's theatre has its own permanent orchestra, producers, scenic designers, and workshops for making properties and dresses. Generally, an educationist is on the staff. He, or more frequently she, is the active link between the school and the theatre. The collaboration between the two is very close, even to using the theatre as an aid to discipline. A pupil may be excluded from visiting the theatre as a punishment. Schools may ask for a special play which may either be in the syllabus or linked with the syllabus of some subject, to be put on. As a general rule though, the theatre makes its own production plans for the year.

The audience is divided into age groups, seven to twelve and twelve to seventeen/eighteen years, and plays are given accordingly.

The performances for the younger ones are in the afternoons—school finishes by one o'clock for these—and for the older ones about six p.m. They generally come in school parties and the ordinary adult is very definitely discouraged. In Kiev, up to the war, the general practice was for the children to do their own booking of seats at a specially designed booking office. The Germans destroyed this theatre. The price of seats would correspond to sixpence and a shilling and tickets are provided free for needy cases.

The repertory is extraordinarily varied. For the younger age group fairy tales of any land, presented as plays and as operas, play a predominant part. Dramatised versions of Kipling's *Just So Stories* and of *Mowgli* are exceedingly popular. Adventure stories too are very popular, and during and since the war they have naturally dealt with heroes in the struggle against the Nazis and with incidents from the war.

The same topics presented differently may also be used for plays for the older age-group. For these too, plays may deal with the great adventure of socialist construction, or they may be about scientists such as Lomonosov. Latterly the classics of other lands had begun to be introduced. *Romeo and Juliet* was planned for 1939 for Kiev.

Boys and girls are encouraged to be critical and to send in their criticism. The theatre circle—the enthusiasts who attend regularly—will meet the producer, playwright and actors and discuss a production.

The theatres have the usual lounge accommodation, a large hall which here is used for games, dancing or even performing while waiting for the play to begin. Children may arrive half to an hour before the performance begins to indulge in these activities. A buffet provides refreshment, including excellent ices, at a very reasonable cost.

For the under sevens there is an increasing number of puppet theatres, which to-day have considerable experience and training behind them. The central puppet theatres are housed in spacious buildings, with workshops and libraries. They vary considerably in style according to the particular puppet theatre. Vocal music is always an important part of a spectacle. Animal stories and fairy tales are the general topics, but anything may be used. Children come in parties from the kindergartens or from a block of flats. Performances are also given in the children's sections of the adult clubs. There are also travelling companies which give puppet shows



Reading the latest publications at a library for children



Julia Kreitsereva reciting her poems to the school literary circle

to children in collective farms, in mountain villages, Arctic settlements, in fact anywhere where there are children. A Children's Book Theatre, in which all the plays are based on children's books, was a great joy to the under-eights on my last visit, and used quite deliberately to encourage a love of books.

Children's Cinemas receive considerable attention from the authorities. These have their lounge rooms like the theatres, for different activities, until the performance begins. It is particularly valuable here, for one is not allowed in the auditorium during a performance. There is a special department of the film industry for the production of children's films. Here again the children are divided into age-groups. The subjects for films may be historical or geographical, and they will certainly also deal with modern Soviet life and its problems. Latterly there has been severe criticism of the film industry for not paying sufficient attention to children's films. Special children's concerts, and exhibitions for children are a regular feature of Soviet children's life. Libraries for children and reading-rooms with trained people to discuss the books with them are another leisure facility.

It should be evident from all the above that the Soviet authorities regard children's leisure with great seriousness. Whatever the provision is, it is such as must evoke respect for the particular activity, a feeling on the part of the boy or girl that they are being treated seriously, and that something is demanded from them. Effort is stimulated and encouraged. The purpose of all this provision is not to keep the young amused or just to keep them off the streets. It is profoundly educational and social in its conception and interpretation.

Chapter Twelve

HOME AND SCHOOL

THAT the foundation of the child's character is laid in the home is a maxim firmly held in the Soviet Union. That the school will be successful only if it has the active intelligent support of the home, is another widely held conviction. But the school and the home do not instinctively come together nor necessarily follow the same paths in the bringing up of children. Co-operation between home and school, so desirable, indeed so essential, had in the first instance to be nurtured and encouraged until it became a habit. To-day it is a habit that is spreading to more and more homes and schools.

The Soviet teacher comes from the people. The school which he or she attended was a people's school attended by the children of the factory workers, the shop assistants or the peasants. There are no social barriers between the teacher and the children's parents, so that the hostile parent is rare and the indifferent parent is becoming equally rare.

The visits, at least once a term, which a teacher must pay to the pupil's home, gives opportunity for becoming acquainted and establishing friendly relations. It is not always achieved easily, and a tactless teacher can do much harm.

Every school has a parents' association on the committee of which sit the Head and the Instruction Supervisor. In addition to the School Association and School Parents' Committee there are parents' class committees on which the class teacher sits.

Parents' Associations and committees were particularly important in war time. In 1943, during the war, over the signature of the late Commissar for Education, V. Potemkin, regulations governing Parents' Committees were issued.

The object of the Parents' Committee, which is a voluntary body, is to help the authorities and the school. Its aims were stated as follows:

- (a) To ensure the reality of universal compulsory education.
- (b) To arrange for help for needy pupils.
- (c) To provide continuous care for children of men in the Forces, war invalids and orphans.
- (d) To ensure that there is some supervision of children and to deal with waifs and strays.
- (e) To guide children's leisure activities.
- (f) To see that children observe the rules of behaviour.
- (g) To see that the school lacks nothing.
- (h) To popularise educational ideas among parents.

The Parents' Committee consists of two or three representatives of each class, elected by vote at the beginning of each year at the class parent's meetings, and of the school Head.

All the parents should be prevailed upon to attend the election meetings.

For the day-to-day work, the Parents' Committee elects a working committee consisting of a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and two to four other members. In schools with less than eight classes, the three officers are sufficient.

The Parents' Committee is guided in its work by the School Head and the School Staff Committee.

The Parents' Committee must meet not less than once a month.

The work of the Parents' Committee is planned for each term; the plan is adopted at a meeting of the Committee and approved by the Head.

Decisions are valid if at the meeting not less than fifty per cent of the Committee Members are present. Decisions of the Parents' Committee and of the Parents' Association require the approval of the Head.

Members of the Committee organise an active group of parents in a class and with their aid the work is carried on.

Committee members maintain close contact with the rest of the parents through visits to the home, through talks with individuals, and through group discussions. A full class parents' meeting must be held not less than once a term.

General meetings of all the parents are organised by the Head and the Parents' Committee not less than twice a year.

Under the guidance of the Head, the Parents' Committee maintains the closest contact with the School's Patron organisation. A committee is empowered to apply to the Patron or to any other body for help for the school.

With the cognisance of the Head, the Parents' Committee can set up temporary sub-committees of parents, to carry out any part of the plan of activities. The Parents' Committee is empowered to hold supplies and finances, obtained from voluntary subscriptions by parents, from the proceeds of concerts, plays and other such activities.

The money is kept in a current account at a savings bank and may be disbursed by the Head on aid to children of serving men of war invalids to orphans and other needy children, and on out-of-school activities, in accordance with estimates adopted by the general school parents' meeting.¹

It should be realised that the instructions enumerated above are more in the nature of recommendations. It depends on the school to what extent they are carried out.

These Parents' Committees were found invaluable during the war. Their members, or others directed by them, took duty during breaks between lessons as well as in the long break in the playground. They helped with school meals and carried out all those tiresome non-academic duties which in England are the burden of the teacher. These activities, augmented during the war, continue to-day.

At every school excursion there are parents to help teachers, and many of them do regular duty in the school circles, taking an embroidery class, or carpentry class.

In a school in Kiev before the war the parents formed themselves into patrols. Every evening, between eight and nine, they were on the streets of their neighbourhood to see that no children under twelve years were out after nine p.m.

Like parents elsewhere, they help with costumes for plays and with school parties, often preparing the food, as well as decorating the school. Everything that helps the school comes within their sphere.

Since the liberation from the enemy much rebuilding of schools has been done by the parents. During the war, and since, there have been Parents' School Days, when a thousand mothers and fathers have marched off with tools and paints and brooms to clear up, repair and redecorate the schools in their district ready for the new school year.

Even before the war, in districts with a slack or inefficient education authority, parents and collective farmers built secondary

¹ For the "Rights and Duties of the Members of the Parents' Committee," see Appendix IV, p. 181.

schools for their children in their free time, providing the materials as well as the labour.

The school in return helps the parents in their task of bringing up children. It is regarded as of the utmost importance that there should be a common approach to the child at school and at home, that what is held to be wrong at school should also be wrong at home, that the authority of the teacher should be upheld in the home and the authority of the parent upheld in the school.

It is considered equally important that the mother and father should be in agreement on child training. The practice common to every country of one parent allowing the child to do something that the other has prohibited, is regarded as detrimental to desirable discipline, and may end in giving the child a dual personality with resultant disintegration. To achieve this agreement between parents much education in the art and science of bringing up children is necessary.

The school has regular discussions for groups of parents on problems that worry them. These are generally led by a teacher or by the Head. From time to time however specialists, educationists, psychologists, social workers and doctors will give either a single lecture or a course of lectures. Many lectures and courses will be arranged by the Parents' Committee. Parents may come to the school for individual consultations.

It is much more difficult to obtain the co-operation of parents for modern ideas among the smaller nationalities that only began to emerge from primitive tribal existence with the coming of the Soviets. From time to time districts are found where it is necessary somehow or other to convince parents that school is important, to persuade them to have their children at school at least until the age of fourteen.

In *Uchitelskaya Gazeta*, the Teachers' paper, of March 1946, is the story of a Buryat Mongol teacher, and how he solved the problem in his district, a populous one for his republic, with twenty-three schools. None had existed there before 1920. As late as 1940 attendance was very poor, ten being considered a full class. The majority were boys, since the parents still considered that girls did not require education. They had not yet completely thrown off their centuries-old superstitions and prejudices.

Even before the war, very concerned about this, a young teacher, Baltakhanov, with some of the others, started an educational

campaign among the parents to introduce them to modern ideas. As a result, the numbers in the school grew noticeably. The war intervened, then Baltakhanov returned invalided out of the army, and found the situation worse than ever. He was now director of the District Education Authority. Once again he began a campaign for school attendance. First came visits to the home, not by the teacher but by a parent, by the most respected citizen in the village—the Party Secretary, or the Collective Farm Chairman or the highly respected elder, who traditionally wielded great authority in the community.

On visiting the schools in the different villages himself, Baltakhanov was shocked to find how few children remained at school after twelve years, when parents considered the time was ripe for them to earn their own living as shepherds or huntsmen.

When the hunting season begins, all the inhabitants of a settlement from the oldest to the youngest, must send the hunters off on their journey with much ceremony, and with expressions of their care and love. Great tea-drinkings and dinners are arranged at which the seats of honour are given to the hunters. The tastiest dishes are placed before them. Those who remain behind make farewell speeches to each of the departing hunters, giving him orders to kill so many animals, foxes, wolves, and so on.

Baltakhanov decided to use this ancient custom, so deeply rooted in the lives of these people, to the schools' advantage. Why not organise a similar ceremonial send-off for the pupils who have finished the primary school in their village, and are due to move on to the nearest junior secondary school? The suggestion was warmly approved by the Buryat chief of local organisations, and as an experiment, national farewell festivals were organised for the twelve year olds in several schools. The success exceeded all their expectations.

With all the traditional practices the children were dressed in their best and given places of honour. The whole village took part; each pupil received his instructions, under no circumstances whatever was he to run away from school, or leave for home before the year ended. He must work hard at school so as not to bring shame on the community.

The feasting over, the children were placed in the vehicles which were to take them to the village with the junior secondary school. All the villagers followed the vehicle for a considerable distance.

This simple method resulted in filling up Class V in several junior secondary schools and in the one senior secondary school in the district.

But this was only the first step. Baltakhanov knew the Buryats, and knew that while the children would do their best to obey the behests of their elders, unless proper living conditions, clothing and equipment were ensured, they would not stay away long from their families.

Once again he turned to the parents, in the first instance to those who were holding positions of responsibility. They responded generously, with the result that a hundred pupils, from a people that never in its history would be separated from its children, are living in two boarding houses, and attending the school regularly. Other schools in the district have been influenced and are greatly improving.

Now, as a result of this astonishing success, the district is faced with a new problem—insufficient accommodation. All the schools in the district were originally private houses of the better off, which served the early attempts to start education well enough. Now, when there are as many as fifty to seventy children in a school, instead of the fifteen to twenty which was the case previously, overcrowding is serious.

Once again, after consultation and discussion of their resources with the chairman of the district council, the parents' help was sought. As a result, two senior secondary schools were built for the autumn of 1946—one, a new large two-storey building in the district centre, and the other, large additions to an existing school. The schools are each to have a green belt round them, with orchards and flower gardens. All the inhabitants assisted in the construction of the school.

With great satisfaction the teachers note the increasing generosity of the Buryat people to their schools. Baltakhanov explains this as being very natural, for the people can see the benefits the school has brought them. The parents owe it to their children in school that their diet now includes vegetables; they owe the increasing cleanliness and hygiene in their living conditions also to the school.

This example of home and school co-operation is given somewhat in detail because it typifies many difficulties which are peculiar to the Soviet Union, because it illustrates how local initiative works, and also the practical way in which the school and the home, and through the home the community, become linked up.

Many are the methods used to interest parents in the school, and in the welfare of their children. A special periodical, *Home and School*, deals with many problems that arise in the home. Professors of psychology carry on a vast educational correspondence with parents over the whole Union. From time to time the questions and the answers are published in book form at a very low cost. The difficulties appear to be very much those found in any family anywhere in the world.

Perhaps the most interesting form of education of parents is the "Parents' University". They are not universities as the term is generally understood. They have no special buildings or special equipment, and they have only one faculty, which might be termed "the bringing up of children". They are generally to be found functioning in the school attended by the children of the "under-graduates". And, like so much that is valuable and stimulating in the Soviet Union, Parents Universities arose out of local initiative.

In 1939 a meeting was held of the workers and staffs, both men and women of three large factories in Moscow: a boot factory, a textile factory, and an engineering works. The subject for discussion this time was not "fulfilling the works plan, or raising output per head of the inefficient worker". The subject was "our children—their work at school, their leisure, their general behaviour". As the meeting proceeded, and fathers and mothers took the floor, it became evident how inexperienced many young parents were, and how great was their desire for knowledge in their home profession of parenthood. They asked many questions about education and psychology. It was obvious that they must be taught.

The factory newspapers supported the initiative of their workers. The Head of the biggest school in the Kirov District of Moscow placed the school at the disposal of the parents.

Professors, teachers and doctors expressed their readiness to give one or two lectures free. The Principal of the Moscow Municipal Institute for the Further Training of Teachers, and a member of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., offered to take charge of the "University". Thus was the "Parents' University" born.

Three hundred parents attended the first lecture. The majority were women, young and middle-aged, but there were also a good few men.

At the end of the first lecture there was an avalanche of questions, written and oral. As the lecturer answered them, so new questions

were put. The clock showed a few minutes to midnight, and still the questions came. It was clear to all; "Parents' Universities" were essential.

In that first year the parents attended nine lectures, then came the summer holidays. In the second year, in 1940, the parents came again and now they studied once a week on Thursday evenings. Gradually there was a regular audience. The majority who registered tried not to miss one lecture. Many brought new students, neighbours, or mates from the factory. And the new ones became enthusiastic, and as great propagandists for the "Parents' Universities" as the old students.

The lectures dealt with the most varied questions, each one very real to the parents. The care of the children's health, adolescence and its problems, a rational diet for children, the authority of the parent and personal example, the training of will and character, friendship and comradeship among children, the choice of a profession, children's leisure, and many more subjects were thrashed out.

The staff of this "Parents' University" was very highly qualified. Professors of international reputation, authors of books on education, psychologists and eminent doctors, members of university staffs, all gladly gave their service.

If the students were satisfied with their lecturers they in their turn were equally satisfied with the students. Said Professor Arkin: "I have never had such an attentive, disciplined, enquiring and grateful body of students."

They were indeed attentive, these weavers and cutters, locksmiths and housewives, who always came with a note-book.

No sooner was the lecture over, than the lecturer was surrounded by a group of eager people and discussion continued.

Then parents began to turn to their teacher in between lectures. It was thus that a "telephone contact" was established between many parents and Professor Ivanovsky of the Institute of Medicine who had given a lecture on children's health, and with professor Arkin after his lecture on "The problems of adolescence, physical and psychological".

An interesting result of these lectures was the growth of interest in psychology and the request for books to be read on the subject and later an interest in other subjects. A lecture on "Children and the Cinema" had the desired result of reducing visits to the cinema

before the decree prohibiting attendance during the day of children under sixteen was passed and visits were regarded as too frequent.

"Parents' Universities" are to-day found in all large cities. They are being greatly encouraged, and are receiving every help from education authorities and from the community generally. The war years, with the break-up of family life for so many, and with the absence of parental supervision, have left many urgent problems for the home and school. In many towns these "universities" are now regular two-year courses with attendance twice a week. Quite often such subjects as history, literature, or the rôle of science, are taken in the course on the request of the parents. This voluntary genuine education creates a desire for more education. The fact that the courses are nearly always held in the school, with the co-operation of the School Head and often the participation of the staff, binds home and school once more close together.

In addition to these courses, attended on week evenings, there are "Parents' Sunday Universities". A course of this kind was begun in the Moskvoretsky district of Moscow in 1945. It had (August 1946) four branches. The "University" has opened consulting centres where experienced teachers and doctors give advice to parents, and where exhibitions, excursions and similar activities are arranged.

The Academy of Educational Science is publishing a magazine for parents dealing specially with the problems of bringing up children. The value of this and like publications lies in their being in the hands of educationists and free from any commercial implications.

The whole country is realising that there must be the fullest co-operation between home and school and that this can primarily be achieved through educating the parents first.

Chapter Thirteen

THE PROBLEM OF THE DELINQUENT

It is doubtful whether any civilised country was ever faced with the problem of child and adolescent delinquency on so vast a scale and in so acute a form as was Soviet Russia in 1920 and the years following.

The war of 1914 was followed by the civil war, by the terrible famine of 1921, by foreign intervention and a blockade which would not even permit a ship with drugs for typhus-stricken areas to sail from London to Leningrad. The country was in the grip of starvation. All energies for the time being had to be directed to the fighting of the combination of enemies determined to prevent the setting up of this new workers' state. It was therefore not at once possible to adopt serious measures to deal with the increasing numbers of homeless youngsters who, bereft of kith and kin, roamed the countryside searching for food and shelter, and became an ever-growing menace to the law-abiding citizen. Violence, robbery, arson, and murder assumed grave proportions.

The problem became so insistent that measures of some kind had to be adopted. It was not the destruction of property, however, which caused the gravest anxiety to Lenin and those around him, but the destruction of humanity in the children. It was the appalling waste of lives with their potentiality for human endeavour and human greatness which so perturbed the Soviet leaders.

It was decided in 1920 to set up homes for these delinquents and both the Commissariat of Justice and the Commissariat of Education took up the task.

At that period, in reaction from tsarist education, Soviet educationists went over to full and complete freedom for children. No restraint, no coercion, no punishment, no discipline might be employed. That would be violating the child's personality. Kindness, freedom, a pleasant environment and moral suasion were the

principles adopted. It became evident, however, after a time, that these methods were inadequate to solve the problem. So many of the children had become hardened in crime, so many of them had become completely callous through their experiences that the vague sentimentality of their mentors was merely a cause for mockery and ribaldry.

Then the G.P.U. tackled the problem. They set up colonies in charge of men who had gone through the civil war, men who had learnt to understand the criminal, and they were successful. But the outstanding achievement in this great work of reclaiming youth belongs to Anton Makarenko, a great educationist and writer, who was a teacher in a rural school when he was asked to organise a colony for young delinquents. His treatment was so successful, that by 1936 there was no problem of juvenile delinquency in the Soviet Union. There were badly behaved children, there was the boy, very rarely the girl, who stole habitually, there were other cases of anti-social conduct, but they were exceptions. As a problem, delinquency had disappeared.

Do not, however, let us be misled into thinking that the problem was solved by education alone. While it was education that had achieved a considerable success in the re-education of the anti-social boy or girl, it was the combination of a number of factors which, by aiding the work of the educationists, resulted in the prevention of delinquency. For the problem of delinquency is not so much a problem of cure as one of prevention. It is a social problem more than a problem of education. Likewise it is not more policemen or remand homes that are needed, but more understanding of the causes and the will to attack the causes; and this cannot be done "on the cheap". The prevention and cure of delinquents cost money and effort, and need genuine co-operation of all social forces.

It was considered at first by many in Soviet Russia that the cause of delinquency was economic only. But when, after the abolition of unemployment in 1932, and the improved standard of living which followed, delinquency persisted, though in a greatly diminished form, more attention was paid to other factors. The first of these was the children's leisure. Nothing is so conducive to naughtiness, which may imperceptibly grow into delinquency, as having nothing to do, and nowhere to do it. Boredom is responsible for much destructive activity.

Bad housing is another factor. Not only does the child in overcrowded conditions become involved in the emotional complications of adult life, but what is very important, he has no place where he can be left in peace, no corner that is his own.

Another very important factor is home life. The ignorance of parents (however well-meaning), the absence of proper parental guidance, the lack of understanding and appreciation of the child's interest and of his emotional needs, and the example the parents themselves set, all play their part. Again bad health and an undetected deficiency of vision or hearing, may often be responsible for acts of delinquency.

The school can play a great part alike in the prevention and creation of delinquents. A school which is negative, which makes no contribution to the life of the child (or the community) merely stuffing it with knowledge, must share some of the responsibility for the anti-social activity of the young. Even more serious than this, the wrong approach by a teacher can be a decisive factor in a child's life.

Finally, there is the social environment and what may be termed social sanctions—the adult standard of values which the child meets and reads about, the kind of advertisements he sees on the hoardings, the kind of films he sees, and the jokes he hears over the wireless and elsewhere. The Russians do not believe in the inherent criminality of human beings. They believe that it is the factors mentioned above, and possible variations of these, all man-made factors, that produce the delinquent.

The economic factor was in a great measure eliminated by 1940. Not only was unemployment nothing but a memory in the Soviet Union, but the increasing production had so raised the standard of living for the masses that shortage of necessities and of primary luxuries was no longer in itself a cause of criminal acts. The serious extremes of riches and poverty, present in other countries, was absent in the Soviet Union.

Housing was rapidly improving and families no longer had to live huddled in one room. The custom of the Children's Corner in a room, in cases where it was not possible to give up a whole room to them, was spreading widely. This corner, furnished with a table or desk and chairs and the belongings of the children, was sacred to them. Here they could be busy, uninterrupted by mother having to lay the table for a meal, or father waiting to sit just there. It gave

the youngsters a feeling of importance, of counting for something, and the opportunity for uninterrupted play or work.

In the chapter on leisure, I have described the provision that is made for Soviet Children's leisure. Its success is due to the underlying conception of the whole subject of leisure, to the understanding of the needs of the children, and particularly the importance of the early training while the child is still in the kindergarten and the school. The purpose of the leisure facilities is to allow for the satisfaction of the universal need for beauty, present in every child, to provide opportunities for creative activity and self expression. Generous as the provision through clubs of all kinds is, it is not sufficient to serve all the children. Much is done by families themselves, in co-operation, to provide some place in a block of flats or a street, where children can be occupied. Before the war, in the cities of Ukraine particularly, an institution called "Forepost" was very common. It was the simplest form of youth club run by the flats' committee or a street committee of housewives. The house-manager of the block was prevailed upon by the tenants' committee to give up one or two rooms to the children. Funds and equipment were collected, the rooms decorated and furnished by the committee, and there was a club on the children's doorstep. Often the factory, where the people of the street were employed would make contributions and appoint a young trade-unionist member as leader. The secretary or chairman quite often was an elderly housewife whose own children had grown up.

The school has very definitely been made to feel its responsibility for the children outside as well as inside the school. The improved training and the continued training of the teacher, the co-operation of the staff, and the close links with the family have made the school a better instrument in the upbringing of children.

As for the home, that has been dealt with in some detail in the chapter "Home and School". It is generally recognised that to-day, for the Soviet Union, the core of the problem lies there. The increasing facilities and measures for parental education and the increasing number of parents who avail themselves of the opportunities, contributed greatly to the disappearance of delinquency. Finally, the social environment is such as to help every special measure adopted. The adult standard of values is that which is demanded from youth. Work for the community and not possessions brings honour. "Labour is a matter of valour, honour and

glory." The slacker, the bureaucrat, the cheat, is discovered, shown up and publicly dismissed from responsibility.

Society provides endless opportunity for adventure; building new towns, discovering riches under the earth, producing new varieties of fruits and plants, taming rushing torrents, conquering mountain peaks—life is calling to youth continuously and insistently to do great deeds and quite deliberately these deeds and tasks are given the glow of romance. The cinema, newspapers and books, in more or less degree, all support this standard of values. The moral and civic teaching given by teachers and parents in school and home is not nullified by society, but supported by it.

In spite of all these measures, or because they were still insufficient, because Soviet citizens were by no means perfect nor omniscient, there were still cases of delinquency that required to be dealt with. Almost invariably they were found to be due to home conditions. According to Soviet Law, children under twelve years cannot be prosecuted for any offence. From twelve to fourteen years, they may be prosecuted "for such offence as theft, violence, causing bodily injury, murder or attempt at murder, and for actions against State property, such as acts leading to the wrecking of trains, etc."

After the age of fourteen, minors are responsible for any crimes committed and are tried in the ordinary court. Minors are not prosecuted for such offences as petty thefts or similar slight misdemeanours. The whole aim is to keep children out of the court, to bring all the social influences to bear, so that the child may be cured at home without the stigma of an appearance in court. Cases of such minor offences will be handed over to the teacher, to the school Parents' Committee or Class Committee, to the Trade Union Committee or to the Factory Committee; and the place where either or both parents may be working will be drawn in to help. The first step is a careful enquiry into home conditions, and efforts are made to put right whatever is wrong; these efforts may take the form of material aid, of regular visits by someone appointed, of talks with the parents, of public reproof of the parent before the work-mates. The Pupils' Committee at the school is enlisted to help, and the members will do so by taking the youngster to the theatre or cinema, on rambles, and by drawing him into class responsibilities. These measures are generally found successful in cases of minor offences. The more serious offences of the over twelves are tried in the ordinary criminal court, under somewhat special conditions.

There are no special children's courts in the Soviet Union.¹ Under the age of sixteen, they are generally tried in specially allotted Regional Peoples' Courts where the Peoples' Judge is highly experienced, and where the Peoples' Assessors, or lay co-judges, are either educationists or children's doctors, or people who have worked with children. When a case for a minor offence is brought to court, the investigating authority, on dismissal of the case, takes steps to see that the child will be under proper care, either in the home or (where there are no parents, or the home is hopelessly unsuitable) in a special children's home.

Serious young offenders are detained between arrest and trial in special rooms in Houses for the Detention of Minors. Less serious offenders remain at home with their parents who give an undertaking to ensure proper supervision and care: that is, they are put on probation. For children without parents, there is a place of detention that might correspond to a remand home, or again an ordinary home for those guilty of minor offences.

The period between "arrest" and trial is from ten to fifteen days' duration, the period being employed for thorough investigation into the circumstances. Soviet law permits no corporal punishment. Anyone found guilty of employing this is liable to criminal prosecution.

A common punishment for a serious offence is direction to a labour colony for a period according to the law, from one to ten years. The average period is found to be about two years, more than five years never being given. A more common measure is placing the young offender under probation at home with responsibility on the parents or guardian. In rare cases compulsory labour is applied. This would be the punishment for an offence committed in the place of work, the factory or the office, the offender having to work a certain period on reduced pay.

The Soviet Union does not keep statistics for young delinquents. Since the numbers diminished so sharply after 1936 it was not a problem, and was therefore not considered to warrant the special labour and resources required for keeping statistics.

Between thirty and forty per cent of young offenders are directed to a labour commune, and the treatment is successful in ninety per cent of cases. From seventy to eighty per cent of crimes committed by juveniles are crimes of theft. Girls rarely appear as offenders. Among

¹ These have been restored as desirable (1948). They had existed in the early years.

minors under sixteen ten per cent of offences are committed by girls.

Sexual offences are exceedingly rare among juniors, or anywhere for that matter, the whole set-up of society being such as to make them unnatural for young people. For compelling minors to prostitution, the minimum punishment is five years' imprisonment.

THE LABOUR COMMUNE

In Russian this has a very attractive sound, partly because labour is an honoured term, partly because the Labour Communes have produced first-class citizens many of whom to-day are holding positions of great importance and high authority.

Labour Communes which are now all based on the principles as worked out by Anton Makarenko, are the Soviet equivalent of approved schools. There is no Borstal system in the U.S.S.R. As previously stated, offenders under sixteen found guilty of a serious offence or of serious and continuous anti-social behaviour are sent to these labour schools.

They are boarding institutions, and are particularly well equipped with workshops and work-rooms where the effervescent energy can be used up. There is good provision for leisure activities which make demands on the mind and the personality, satisfying emotional needs and giving the satisfaction of free creative work. There are good facilities for sports.

School education is carried on in a school building. A Commune's large estate provides a farm for cattle and dairy produce, poultry, fruit and vegetables and quite often, grain. To a large extent the community is self-supporting. It almost feeds itself, and the income derived from the sale of the goods produced in the workshops covers the expenditure.

The communes are well staffed. The educational staff includes the director, assistant director, and teachers, all of whom are experienced in the work, as well as instructors for workshops and factory. There are also a bursar, a secretary and a book-keeper, a visiting doctor and domestic workers.

Though self-supporting, the school is not isolated. A farm, a factory, a theatre, an army unit in the nearest town or district will adopt the school, from which relationship there results an exchange of visits, letters and gifts. Boys and girls who have no homes will stay on until they get a job, for which they will have been adequately trained in the commune. If at fourteen or fifteen any of them show

any special aptitudes, and their behaviour is satisfactory, they will be sent to a technicum in the nearest town as day pupils where they may be trained for art, music, drama or other professions. Parties from the colony are taken to the nearest Children's Theatre, to an ordinary performance, and in the twenty-minute intervals they mix with the ordinary children in their games. Open days are held when visitors, the leading lights of the city or rural district, will mingle with the pupils. Authors, poets, actors and musicians come to the school and read, act or play, and discuss their work.

These Labour Communes to-day have a tradition of achievement, of good work and good discipline. The new arrival finds himself in an environment that slowly begins to act upon him beneficially.

In all the work of the early successful School Communes there is no indication of special psychological measures being used or of psychiatric treatment being given. No intelligence tests were used on the boys and girls admitted to the Labour or School Communes, though intelligence tests were used in ordinary schools till 1932.

Existing educational literature, Russian or foreign, was also found to be of little help with the task. Most of the homes for the vagabond children that based themselves on "freedom" were to a great extent failures. The really successful teachers were guided by the teachings of Lenin and Stalin on education and on concern for the human being. To bring up the young generation with a communist morality was their goal, and as part of this to inculcate an attitude to labour which would consciously accept the necessary discipline. It was generally held that work, intellectual, manual and artistic, rightly approached and taken, would act as the re-educative agent.

Success did not come at once, and there was no royal road to it. Koofayev of the Dzerzhinsky School Commune attributes their success to the flexibility and variety of the methods and measures used, always bearing in mind the conscious communist goal.

There was much searching and testing and replacing of one method by another, and it was agreed that every boy and girl required an individual approach. This necessitated a careful study of the pupil. As defectives were not sent to ordinary homes it was accepted that the delinquents in a commune were, basically, intellectually and psychologically healthy, and therefore their behaviour defects could and must be remedied.

The first acquaintance with the commune was held to be of great importance. Makarenko was emphatic in his conviction that the

dossiers and case records accompanying the boy and girl should not only be ignored, but should not even be read. The children themselves must be the source of information on their past life, behaviour and conditions, and the information must be given willingly on the initiative of the boy or girl, which implied a situation of mutual confidence and respect between pupil and staff.

Others considered it useful to learn something about the children—both from their case-book and from their former teachers, but never in the presence of the children.

On arrival the youngster was met by the director or his deputy in the attractively furnished staff sitting-room, where the commune and its activities and rules were described to him. He was then introduced to the chairman of the Council of the Children's "Active"—the council of elected representatives from the different children's sections and committees—who accompanied them on a tour of the building. On the way the new arrival learnt of the home's régime.

After viewing the house, school, workshops, etc., came a bath, a set of new clothing which fitted, a meal served by monitors, and a visit to the bedroom where the new arrival made his bed with a set of clean linen, and lay down to rest. Before finally going to bed he was allocated to his brigade and told where he was expected to go in the morning—to school or to a workshop. Beyond this, there was no special attention directed to him.

No act which could in any way wound his susceptibilities was permitted. In the Dzerzhinsky Commune no reprimands or corrections were used for the first two or three weeks.

Experience has shown that generally the delinquent is quiet and submissive for the first two or three days, "smelling out" the place and making up his mind whether to stay or to abscond. In the Dzerzhinsky Commune they divide the delinquents into five types: (a) the social type who defends his pals and works with them—he adapts himself comparatively easily to the ordered life of the home; (b) the egoist, the boy who steals or commits other offences on his own, and is a much more difficult case; (c) the over-sanguine type who sets out with great confidence and loses his confidence quickly; (d) the sham gang-leader who is in reality an exhibitionist, and holds his position by blustering and bullying; (e) the boy who can do nothing, who is completely lacking in self-confidence, and who presents some of the greatest difficulties. Each type demands a different approach and different treatment, and it may take months

before his personality is sufficiently well known to the staff.

There is complete agreement on the great value of self-government, and of children's organisations; and it is realised that self-government in a residential home for delinquents is not the same thing as self-government in a day school. In the latter, the children are also subject to home and parental influences, while in the School Commune the teacher and the warden have to take the place of the parents, the other children that of brothers and sisters. Hence the self-government must be guided with great care—by the teacher or warden.

Children's organisations take a variety of forms. Class committees, hobbies' committees, work committees, house duties' committees are all used. In the Dzerzhinsky Commune, children were in addition divided into mixed age groups called brigades. A brigade shared the same bedroom, sat at the same table for meals and so on. It was small so as to allow for intimacy and a close-knit family feeling.

Makarenko¹ in his Labour Commune had an organisation known as the Institute of Commanders. The boys were organised into troops for special jobs of work, with the most energetic and resourceful appointed as commander; Makarenko conferred with the commanders on all important decisions affecting the colony.

It is important that every member of a commune be given some responsibility, which, however, must be commensurate with his capacity to discharge it. After the first two or three months, during which period any necessary extra help was given, a good standard of work in the class-room was demanded. Intellectual development and achievement are held to assist in the elimination of behaviour difficulties. There is close co-operation between class instructors and wardens as well as with domestic workers.

Lack of space precludes a full and detailed description of methods and approach. One can sum up by saying that the first requisite is the experienced psychologist-teacher with a profound love for and faith in children. Then comes adequate accommodation for work and leisure. Close ties with the world outside are also very important. There must be an ordered existence and a firm discipline the purpose of which is obvious and which is accepted by the community. Life must be made imposing and colourful and present the boys and girls with a perspective, with heights to scale. The teacher and warden

¹ Makarenko died in 1937. His writings have become educational classics, studied by parents and teachers.

must, as soon as possible, discover the positive or the good in the newcomer and work from that. This may all sound very amateurish but the results have proved the Soviet approach to the problem of delinquency wholly sound—at any rate for the Soviet Union.

The number of failures in the School or Labour Communes has been insignificant while many of the former boys and girls are to-day in leading positions in every sphere of life, and the rest are useful and respected citizens wherever they may be.

Between 1934 and 1937, one hundred and thirty-nine adolescents left the Dzerzhinsky School Commune and with the exception of six, that is, less than five per cent, they were either working in factories or farms, attending technical schools or in one case continuing education in the university. The six fell under the influence of criminal elements. The blame for this is laid on the Commune.

POST-WAR CONDITIONS

The war has left its mark on Soviet children as on everything else. The need to concentrate all forces on winning the war temporarily shut out for many people the permanent essentials. Schools with their leisure provisions were commandeered. Many Pioneer Houses and clubs were closed. Many of the other institutions restricted their activities. Foreposts almost completely closed down in the Ukrainian and other cities. No one had time to supervise children's rooms in the apartment blocks or streets. Homes were left without fathers. There were whole villages without a man in them. In the cities particularly, women went off to work and the children were left without parental control. Thousands of children were evacuated long distances, the journey on one occasion taking one month. Hundreds of thousands, who had not succeeded in being evacuated, were caught up in the German occupation. These had to learn to steal, to cheat, to lie, in order first to survive and secondly to work against the enemy. Very many missed education for long periods.

It is, therefore, not to be wondered at that hooliganism, foul language, stealing and cheating and the minor misdemeanours reappeared. But it should be made clear that there was no crime wave among juveniles as a result of the war. Already in 1942 it was realised that special measures must be taken to prevent difficulties. And it was the community that awoke to their responsibility for the children as a whole. It was the community that realised that the combined efforts of society would be needed to prevent delinquency.

from becoming a problem. And society in practice meant the trade union members in a factory, the residents of a street or an apartment block, the members of a collective farm.

As early as 1942 some schools began the practice of the extended school day. When lessons were over, dinner was provided in the school. After dinner two hours out-of-door activities were organised. In the meantime, class-rooms had been turned into club-rooms or homework-rooms. The boys or girls remained under supervision, occupied the whole time, until the mother having finished work, called for them.

In many factories, on the initiative of the women members of the committee, the factory equipped a room as a club-room and appointed a leader to take charge of the boys and girls whose mothers were working in the factory. Here they remained until their mothers were free.

Since the war a great drive is being made to restore and increase all the leisure facilities. A report in *Uchitelskaya Gazeta* of March 2nd, 1946, is typical of the way in which the problem of behaviour among juveniles is being tackled. Fedyakino is a large village in the Vologda district; its collective farm embraces five hundred families. During the war the village was left almost entirely in the hands of the women folk. Young boys replaced their fathers, taking on adult tasks and duties. The result was not altogether good, for they copied indiscriminately the bad as well as the good habits of the adults, including smoking and swearing which Russians disapprove of for the young. Youngsters roamed the streets late at night and, so it is reported, hung around the older courting couples.

The collective farm called a meeting of its members to discuss their children. All came, and each made a critical contribution, particularly the men returned from the war. One member was especially bitter about the lack of care for war orphans. The meeting went on for four hours and then finally decisions were taken. The collective farm would take full responsibility for the orphans and build and equip new homes for them. Children who had lost their fathers only would continue to receive aid, that is money, provisions and clothing. School feeding would be organised before the end of the month. Concerts, excursions, visits to the nearest children's theatre were to be planned.

Every parent undertook to supervise homework and to keep a watchful eye on behaviour outside the home. The meeting assigned

two thousand five hundred roubles for books for the children's section of the village library, and further funds were assigned for regional study and other out-of-school activities.

Finally, the meeting of peasants demanded regular consultations between teachers and parents, instructing the collective farm chairman and the Head of the school to call special general meetings not less than once in two months to check up on the work for the children.

The steps taken by the workers of a Moscow factory are equally typical of the people's approach to the problem. A weaver, Varvara Pavlova, herself bereaved of a son in the war, approached the factory committee with the suggestion that they should organise a guardianship scheme for families of fallen men. The suggestion was received by everyone with warm approval. After discussion, a committee of seven was elected, a representative from each of the main shops of the factory where meetings were held. All agreed to work an extra day for the fund to be created. The first contribution was twenty-four thousand roubles. This was increased by forty thousand roubles by the factory management. The help of forty young Komsomols was enlisted. They visited the families and discovered their needs. Soon the factory was caring for one hundred and fifty-seven families with one hundred and fifty-five children of school age and seventy-six under school age. The guardians made themselves responsible for seeing that all the children were able to attend school. Help was to be given irrespective of whether the mothers continued to work in the factory or not. If the fathers or they had worked there for some time it was to be sufficient. A decision was also taken to restart the "Forepost" clubs.

The war orphans, and particularly those children who had spent a long time under Nazi influence, or lived in forests and dug-outs, might easily have created a serious situation. Special receiving centres were set up to which the militia (police) took any child found wandering about. Here they received careful initial treatment. They were cleansed, clothed and fed, and re-introduced to human decencies. From these centres they were sent to orphan homes, most of which are run by the government, but a great many supported by different sections of the community. Every house has a guardianship committee whose members pay frequent and regular visits. All homes are inspected at frequent intervals. Cases of neglect by officials are published in the press and the officials are summarily dismissed.

Many children on arrival in a home were problem children. They had seen so much horror and cruelty! The staffs, however, are usually people with a boundless love for children, a deep faith in them, and great understanding which they combine with infinite patience. No special measures are used with such children, but there is one unbreakable rule, never to ask them questions about their past. Everything is done to find out the interest that might act as a healing agent. For one boy who had stolen on his first night, cursed everybody and decided to run away, this interest turned out to be playing the accordion. An accordion was the only thing he had managed to save when the Germans killed his family and smashed his home. Then they had burnt the cottage in the loft of which he had hidden the accordion.

A twelve year old girl who had been wounded in the face was so horrified at the disfigurement on the removal of the bandages, that she lay down on her bed, refused to leave it, refused food and would answer no questions. A watchful teacher had noticed her interest in the small children, and told her that the little ones in the sick bay were asking for her. This was her salvation.

When the children in the homes appear to have reached normality they may be adopted. Adoption is very widespread and is greatly encouraged, for it is held in the Soviet Union that nothing can really replace a home. The rules governing adoptions are very strict. The agreement of the Education Authority and the Executive Committee of the District Council must be obtained. An inspector sends in a written report after investigation into the home conditions. A medical certificate is required on the health of the would-be parents and a psychiatrist's report on their mental health. After adoption, the home is visited at regular intervals.

It is by means of these varied and widespread measures, and because of the social responsibility there is for children, that juvenile delinquency has not anywhere in the Soviet Union reached the proportions of a problem. There is every expectation that the maladjustments caused by the conditions of war will in time be dealt with successfully, for the Soviet Union has the experience, the suitable people, and it is prepared not to stint itself over the financial outlay involved.

Chapter Fourteen

THE WAR AND AFTER

SOVIET SCHOOLS were on holiday when the country was attacked by the Germans. Many children fled with their parents; the less fortunate who were too late had to remain under occupation.

In September, when schools were due to begin, instructions were issued to towns in danger zones to evacuate schools. Sometimes, with the forward thrust of the Germans, a second evacuation further east had to be undertaken.

There had been no months of paper planning of evacuation, nor was there a wholesale exodus of children to towns or villages unprepared for what they ultimately received. A member of the school staff, the school bursar where such existed, was sent forth scouting for a new home. This found, he made any arrangements possible with the local people concerned. When the school arrived, it was expected.

This, however, did not eliminate evacuation problems and difficulties. First there was transport. The war was actually raging in the Soviet Union when evacuation was undertaken. Troops and war materials were being transported from the east to the west. Great dismantled factories were going east in endless train loads. Transport for schools had to be fitted in, to be shunted out of the way and often sent round another way because the enemy had already destroyed some part of the line.

The journey often took a week, while there is a case on record of one school whose journey to their reception area took a whole month. All this meant careful detailed planning and preparation. Food, occupations, washing and laundry had to be arranged for, the organisers being wholly uncertain of the eventualities. As far as was practicable, schools took their own equipment, well aware that their hosts would have little to spare.

While there is no case on record of hospitality being refused to a school or the children, many other problems confronted the school

staff on arrival. The accommodation was rarely, if ever, adequate both for boarding and teaching. Children were rarely boarded out. Hostels and class-rooms were improvised from a village hall, a barn, the offices of the local education authority or whatever could be spared.

There were problems of sanitation arising from totally inadequate provision, the urgent problem of securing a stock of fuel for the winter (a crucial matter in that climate), and problems of stocking the larder for the winter with the nearest town sometimes sixty or so miles away. In rare cases, the first encounter with busy collective farmers, who were themselves very worried, was not very friendly. But Soviet adults cannot for long be unresponsive to the needs of children. A tactful approach on the part of the teacher invariably resulted in practical help, almost always in the formation of local committees to help the evacuees. The farmers placed land at the school's disposal, helped them with seed and stock, and evacuated schools reached a stage when they were self-supporting for vegetables and even relied on their own resources for some dairy produce and meat.

A very friendly exchange of experiences developed. The city school invited the local population to concerts, to lectures and discussion, and in the summer older pupils from the evacuee school helped the farmers. In their turn, the school was invited by collective farmers or the villagers to their concerts and evening socials. Children were invited to the homes, and there was an increasing stream of gifts to the school.

Every attempt was made to keep up the standard of education in spite of the difficult conditions of evacuation. Since however evacuation was not compulsory, not all children left the cities. In Moscow, owing to lack of fuel and teachers, all primary schools were closed and many secondary schools too. Thus there were numbers of children receiving no education. Tutorial classes in the homes were organised and examinations were held, but this could not cover all the children, nor the complete course.

In besieged Leningrad the children whom it had not been possible to evacuate continued to receive education in dug-outs and shelters. Here it was found that those children who could attend school regularly survived the famine conditions far better than the children kept at home. The problem of teachers during the war may be gauged from the figures for 1941 and 1943-44. Just before war broke out there were one million two hundred and twenty-two

thousand, eight hundred and five teachers in the Soviet Union. Two years later the number had gone down to seven hundred and seventy-four thousand, seven hundred and ninety-five, a drop of nearly forty per cent. The accommodation situation was nearly, if not quite, as difficult. While hosts of children were pouring in from front-line towns and villages, schools were commandeered by officials and departments. The official who, when placed in a position where he requires accommodation for a new department says: "Let's take a school," appears to be a universal type. Several thousand schools were commandeered, and it took more than two years, and much agitation in the Education Press and repeated instructions, for the decree of 1943 ordering the de-requisitioning of school buildings to be carried out fully.

Educationists too were seconded to other work, though in 1944 an order was issued directing them all back again to their jobs.

To deal with the shortage, the shift system, which had functioned in the post-revolutionary period, was re-introduced. School buildings were used throughout the day and often late into the night. Three schools, consecutively, in one building was a common situation, and there were individual cases which earned severe strictures from Potemkin, the then Commissar of Education, where one building housed five schools of different grades at periods through the day beginning at eight a.m. for the primary grades and ending at two a.m. for a technical school. The size of classes was increased to forty-five, and to thirty for infants. Yet in spite of all these efforts there were some thousands who missed school for varying periods; and to these should be added the thousands in the occupied territories where the Germans rarely troubled to provide education for the Soviet children, except in the few cases when they decided they would need labourers who could just read and write, and for whom they provided a two-year school. Here, much education, of course, was carried on in secret, both teachers and children being aware of the penalty of discovery. And in the territory held by guerillas, education functioned with great enthusiasm, there being instances where it was almost normal.

It was the final terrible destruction of all educational establishments by the retreating enemy (eighty-four thousand schools, technical schools, universities, institutes, training colleges and libraries) which faced the Soviet authorities with an immense task. In Stalingrad alone, during the fighting, five hundred and sixty-seven

schools and one hundred and eighty-six children's homes were destroyed. Rehabilitation of schools, however, began almost before the last German left. In villages where the schools were wrecked, the best available buildings were offered to the teachers. When there were no such buildings, collective farmers offered their homes. Parents, teachers, villagers and older pupils took part in rebuilding the schools. In the evening, the air resounded with the noise of these voluntary builders. Everyone took a hand in making the necessary furniture and equipment. In one village, the teachers, in the evenings, wrote, illustrated and bound sets of readers.

Sometimes neither teachers nor children could wait till the school was furnished. There is the story of a village teacher who had nothing but the four walls and the floor as her class-room and an apology for a blackboard. She marked the floor with squares, one for each child, provided each with a piece of chalk and a damp rag and proceeded with a writing lesson. The children copied a word or a phrase from the blackboard onto the floor. After inspection and correction these were rubbed out and the process was repeated.

The government was not indifferent. Special teams of engineers and technicians were sent to the liberated areas to take charge of the school building, and architects produced designs for the erection of temporary buildings. A decision of the then Council of Peoples' Commissars (now the Council of Ministers) ordered an increase in the production of school furniture and already in 1943 Stalingrad, Rostov, Kursk and Orel regions received thirty-five thousand desks. In Rostov, within four months of its liberation, five hundred and twenty-four schools, serving fifty thousand children, were functioning. The Smolensk area was liberated in August 1943. By February 1944, one thousand two hundred and seventy-two schools were open, attended by one hundred and forty-three thousand, six hundred and nineteen pupils.

To help teachers in their task, special decrees for the improvement of their living conditions were published. Teachers were placed in the same food rations category as industrial and transport workers, and were supplied with lunch at school. The salary increase of 1943 has already been described.¹

To-day, as in the period of great shortage, definite quantities of goods are assigned for children. This reserve ensures the essentials in clothing and footwear for children in the different kinds of

¹ P. 96 and see Appendix II. p. 175.

educational establishments. Again, special attention is paid to the health of the children who lived in the occupied territories. Free sanatoria, sanatorium camps, summer holiday centres, all under medical supervision, serve these children for varying periods. In 1943 one million city children spent their long summer vacation in such establishments. In 1945, the number of children accommodated had increased to one million, six hundred and seventy-five thousand. Over three thousand holiday camps and one hundred summer health centres were used for these children during the summer. In 1947 over two million children spent periods of from four to six weeks in holiday camps. Areas and republics which had not suffered the Nazi invasion sent gifts of text-books, exercise-books, pens and pencils to the less fortunate districts. Vologda Region in the R.S.F.S.R., for example, collected thirty-nine thousand five hundred and forty-five books for public libraries and ten thousand books for school libraries, and themselves arranged for the transport to Leningrad and other regions. Book collecting campaigns resulted in considerable contributions to bare shelves. Irkutsk, another example, collected one hundred and seven thousand, five hundred and thirty volumes.

By December 1945, the education system in the war-ravaged land was in a great measure restored, while in some districts restoration was complete. For example, in Belorussia, the Germans destroyed six thousand three hundred and eight schools, most of the higher education institutions and technical schools, and all the kindergarten and children's homes. They destroyed or looted all furniture, equipment, laboratory apparatus and text-books. The degree of voluntary rebuilding in Belorussia was very high, and aided considerably in restoration. It is estimated that in the Vitebsk region alone, the value of this voluntary work reached four million, four hundred and fifty thousand roubles. In the year 1944-45, ten thousand three hundred and sixty-two schools, primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary, catering for one million, two hundred and sixty thousand, nine hundred and twenty-five pupils were open. The two hundred and five restored Children's Homes accommodate twenty-five thousand orphans. For the 1945-46 school year, the Ministry of Education for the R.S.F.S.R., the sister republic, sent sixty thousand subject teachers to Belorussia. It also sent two hundred thousand exercise-books, and books for fifty school libraries as well as quantities of visual aids.

In every region, there is the same encouraging tale of restoration. In the Lvov Region, nine hundred and sixteen primary and secondary schools were functioning in 1944-45. In addition, such schools as the thirteen special schools for young workers and the one hundred and seventy-three for young peasants were something entirely new for this region, set up after liberation.

In the trans-Carpathian Ukraine, united to the mother country after liberation, in place of the old three gymnasias there are now sixteen senior secondary schools. Also new for this area are the four schools for blind children and deaf mutes, an arts school, and a school for Feldsher¹-obstetricians. The development in these lands recently joined to the U.S.S.R. has been swift. The same region now has six trade schools instead of two—and something entirely new—four technical and two music schools.

In the Ukraine in 1945-46, there were twenty-seven thousand, two hundred and forty-eight schools attended by five million, twelve thousand pupils—eighty-three per cent of the pre-war attendance. They are taught by one hundred and sixty-six thousand, five hundred and fifty-nine teachers.

Both Latvia and Lithuania set about restoring their education with speed. The former now has one hundred thousand children at school. In the latter, it is interesting to note that the old terminology is still in use, for a report gives sixty-one gymnasias, one hundred and fifty pro-gymnasias and two thousand primary schools opened in 1945.

In the R.S.F.S.R., the schools have now reached their pre-war level in numbers—one hundred and eleven thousand, six hundred and fifty schools with over fifteen million pupils.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher education suffered in proportion even more seriously than general education as a result of the war. When war broke out, front line universities and institutes were evacuated and their activities were cut down by half. Thousands of students joined the Forces. No higher education establishment functioned in Nazi-occupied territory. The Germans destroyed wholly or in part, three hundred and thirty-four higher education institutions. They looted or wrecked laboratory equipment, precious instruments,

¹ A medical practitioner with an elementary qualification who works under the control of a doctor.

libraries and priceless collections, particularly in Kiev University. They wrecked and looted one hundred and thirty-seven Teachers' Institutes lying in their way.

By the academic year 1942-43 the number of higher education institutions had shrunk to four hundred and sixty with a student body of two hundred and twenty-seven thousand as compared with the seven hundred and eighty-two institutions and seven hundred and twenty thousand students in 1940.

In 1943 the return home of higher education institutions began. Restoration was started and by 1944, one hundred and ninety-eight institutions were opened again. The tempo of restoration increased and by the 1944-45 academic year, there were seven hundred and twenty higher education institutions with an enrolment of four hundred and fifty-five thousand, two hundred and thirty-eight students. By the following year the numbers had practically reached those of pre-war times—five hundred and sixty-one thousand, four hundred and twenty-nine students and seven hundred and sixty-two institutions.

New higher education institutions, sixty in number, were built during the war, including fifteen industrial and engineering institutes, nine agricultural and three transport and communications institutes. Of the whole number, five were opened in the Urals, five in Siberia and twelve in Central Asia.

The post-war picture for higher education seems particularly encouraging for the non-Russian republics of the U.S.S.R., many of whom had no higher education in pre-Soviet days.

Outside what was called Russia, and the western territory of the old Russian Empire, only Georgia had a university. To-day there are one hundred and fifty-six higher education institutions in these former Russian colonies. Georgia's one university has increased to twenty-one institutions; Armenia has eleven, Uzbekistan thirty-six, Kazakhstan twenty-six, Kirghizia five, and the same progress has been made in other republics.

In the Tadzhik republic, for example, the appropriations for education increased every year throughout the war, being twenty-five per cent greater in 1945 than in 1944. This republic has to-day seven higher education institutions as well as twenty technical schools.

The fourth Five-Year Plan for the Union envisages a further development of higher education. Provision is made for an increase in the number of students to six hundred and seventy thousand—seven hundred thousand by 1950, which will allow one hundred and

forty-five thousand to one hundred and fifty thousand students to graduate yearly.

The end of the Five-Year Plan will see the number of post-graduate research workers raised to ten thousand which will provide the country with an annual complement of highly qualified personnel of two thousand six hundred to two thousand eight hundred. The budget for 1945 assigned two thousand, eight hundred and fifty-six million roubles for higher education, an increase of eight hundred and twenty million roubles on the previous year. In addition to that, the Eleventh Session of the Supreme Soviet made an additional assignment of ten million roubles for rehabilitation of higher education institutions and the building of new village schools. The total education budget for 1945 reached a sum of twenty-eight thousand, five hundred and twenty-one million roubles, an increase of eight thousand, two hundred million roubles over 1944.

The education budget for 1947 is even more revealing of the Soviet peoples' attitude to education; fifty-two thousand, four hundred million roubles was the sum allocated, representing an increase of fourteen thousand, nine hundred million roubles over 1946. In September 1947 the post-war numbers attending school reached thirty-one million three hundred thousand compared with thirty-two million nine hundred thousand in 1940. Some idea of the number of children killed as a result of the war and occupation may be gained from this. There is an increase of thirty per cent in kindergarten accommodation over 1940. By the end of 1947 numbers in the universities and institutes will reach six hundred and ninety-six thousand, an increase of ninety-one thousand over 1946 and an increase of one hundred and fifty-five thousand over 1940. The expenditure on vocational schools of different types showed an increase of forty-one per cent over the previous year. The total budget for higher education and vocational training is more than double that of 1946. Expenditure on scientific research was increased by one thousand five hundred million roubles and was treble that of 1940. The falling prices of goods since 1945 makes these increases real. The Budget Commission moved after discussion an additional thirty-one million, seven hundred thousand roubles for school equipment.

The Belorussian republic expended one third of its budget on education. The R.S.F.S.R. had in the school year 1946-47 one hundred and fifteen thousand schools with fifteen million five hundred

thousand pupils, and there has been a nine per cent improvement in attendance at primary—four-year—schools and a six per cent improvement in seven and ten-year schools over the previous year. In that republic, education is given in thirty-seven different languages, and the development of boarding schools in the Far North has provided accommodation for twenty-seven thousand children.

The purely educational problems which confront Soviet educationists in the post-war period are not as easy to solve as the problems of buildings and equipment. Almost every issue of *Ouchitelskaya Gazeta*—The Teachers' Daily—and every issue of the numerous educational journals, carry criticism and discussion of some aspect or other of education. One of the problems with which almost everyone is concerned is that of the boys and girls who fail in the passing-up test or examination. Teachers, inspectors, education authorities, and syllabus-content are discussed and frankly criticised. The suggestion, hinted at only by a few teachers, that there may be children whose mental equipment makes failure natural and who require a longer period to reach the same transfer level as brighter children, has met with strong opposition from educationists and psychologists and will be rejected by those responsible for educational theory and practice. Nor is extra coaching regarded as a solution. It is likely that there will again be a review of syllabuses in the direction of reduction.

Inevitably, in a country where education is so closely geared to life in its every manifestation, it will reflect not only the impact of war but the urgencies of reconstruction, and the preoccupation with international security, as well as the need to return to peacetime leisure and culture. There is a great educational ferment in the Soviet Union, for the problems of discipline and of the development of those qualities which the Soviets consider essential in a citizen who is to build a communist society, when seen against a different background, take on different aspects and may require a different approach. The encouraging feature is the keenly critical attitude of Soviet educationists themselves as well as the high regard in which education is held by the whole community. They will continue to discuss and to argue about every kind of educational problem and because they are free from financial preoccupation either for themselves as individuals or for education as a whole they are likely to make a valuable contribution to educational theory and practice not only for their own country but for other countries too.

APPENDIX I

RULES FOR PUPILS:

Every pupil must—

1. Stubbornly and persistently master knowledge, so that he may become an educated and cultured citizen and make the greatest possible contribution to the Soviet fatherland.
2. Study diligently, be regular in attendance and punctual at lessons.
3. Unquestioningly obey the orders of the head and teachers.
4. Arrive at school with all the requisite text-books and writing accessories; have everything ready for the lesson before the arrival of the teacher.
5. Come to school clean, with hair brushed and neatly dressed.
6. Keep his desk clean and tidy.
7. Immediately after the bell, go to his place in the class-room. The teacher's permission must be obtained to enter or leave the class during a lesson.
8. During lessons, sit straight, not have elbows on the desk or sprawl, listen attentively to the explanations of the teachers and the answers of pupils, not talk, nor do things that have no relation to the lesson.
9. Rise and greet the teacher and Head on their entry into the class-room and on exit.
10. When answering questions stand up straight, and sit down when told by the teacher. When wishing to answer or ask a question raise the hand.
11. Write down accurately in the homework-book or in a special exercise-book, the homework for the next lesson and show this to his parents. All homework must be the pupil's own work.
12. Be respectful to the Head and teachers. When meeting a teacher or the Head in the street greet them with a polite bow; boys raise their caps.

13. Be polite to those who are older. Behave modestly and becomingly in school, in the street, and in public places.
14. Not use rude or abusive language, not smoke, not play games for money.
15. Take care of school property. Take care of his own things and those of his comrades.
16. Be attentive and thoughtful towards old people, small children, the weak and the sick, move out of their way, give up a seat, and help them in every way possible.
17. Listen to his parents, help them and help with younger brothers and sisters.
18. Keep his room clean, look after his clothes and footwear and tidy his bed.
19. Carry on his person the pupil's card, look after it carefully and not hand it over to anyone else, and show it on request to the Head and teachers.
20. Treasure the honour of his school and his class like his own honour.

Infringement of "The Rules for Pupils" is liable to punishment which, in extreme cases, may be exclusion from school.

To see these rules of behaviour in their proper perspective, they must be placed against the whole Soviet background: the great and varied facilities for creative self-expression through voluntary leisure occupation, where movement and activity and relationships with other pupils and instructors, are free and unconstrained. We should relate the rules to the feelings of great affection and respect which Soviet adults have for children and the general absence of the feeling of possessiveness over offspring or, indeed, over other people. We should sketch into the pattern the freedom of intercourse and the confidence there exists between children and adults.

A part of the pattern must be drawn by Soviet educational history: the wholly unrestrained freedom that was allowed to children, the complete absence of any form of constraint, the absence of any demands by the adult on children which was current in the first post-revolutionary years.

Soviet educationists have seen life shorn of all formality and of all rules, of external expressions of respect for human beings as such. They have seen it shorn of all the graces of life, and they have not found it good. They argue that this kind of life makes human

relations poor and arid, a sort of sub-standard human living. They argue that inconsiderate behaviour, ill manners, rowdyism, etc., are not necessarily an expression of a free personality, just as civilised behaviour is not necessarily a sign of repression. Indeed it may well be the other way round. They consider that in the Soviet environment the reasonably early acquisition of civilised habits will free the individual for growth, and add serenity and graciousness to the life of the people.

There is a careful educational procedure with the "rules". They are discussed with the pupils and even argued about. It is emphasised that a formal mechanical approach—handing out the cards and telling the children they must obey—has no value whatever. The pupils must understand the rightness of the rules and their purpose, and only when the boy or girl approves of them, will they become valuable.

One or two of the rules may perhaps bring a smile, but most of them are the things we strive for in our schools and our homes, but with apparently little hope of achievement; and since we have never had a revolutionary break with victorianism, we should be afraid, lest we be accused of victorianism, to put the rules in print.

Having as a nation lived through a period of no conventions, the Russians are no longer afraid to use convention as a servant, not a master. They are reviewing the traditions of ceremonious behaviour, which used to be and is to-day, the index of the dignity and importance of people as human beings. It appears to be in no way inhibitive. (For an enlargement of this theme see *How do you do Tovarish*, by Ralph Parker. Harrap.)

SALARY SCALES. (ROUBLES PER MONTH.)

As fixed by decree of the Council of Peoples' Commissars (now Ministers) on August 1943.

(N.B.—By the time this is in print salaries may be raised again.)

TEACHING STATUS	URBAN			RURAL		
	Number of years teaching			Numbers of years teaching		
	Under 5 yrs.	5-10 yrs.	Over 10 yrs.	Under 5 yrs.	5-10 yrs.	Over 10 yrs.
(a) <i>Primary Teachers.</i> (Classes I-IV.)						
Grade I. Qualified in Teaching School ..	400	450	500	350	400	450
Grade II. Unqualified—General Secondary Education only ..	350	400	450	325	375	425
(b) <i>Middle School Grade.</i> (Classes V-VII.)						
Subjects: Russian and native language, literature, mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, history, constitution of U.S.S.R., natural history, military physical training, foreign language.						
Grade I. Qualification: Graduate ..	500	550	600	450	500	550
Grade II. Qualification: Teachers' Institute or comparable ..	475	525	575	425	475	525
Subjects: Art and Music.						
Grade I. Qualification: Graduate ..	430	460	500	400	430	470
Grade II. Qualification: Secondary School Education ..	400	430	470	370	400	430

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TEACHING STATUS	Number on Register		
	Under 280 Under 7 classes	280-560 Over 7 classes	Over 560 Over 14 classes
(a) Instruction Supervisor.			
Junior Secondary School.			
Grade I. Graduates.			
Urban	350	425	500
Rural	300	375	450
Grade II. Non-graduates.			
Urban	300	375	450
Rural	250	325	400
(b) Instruction Supervisor.			
Senior Secondary School.			
Grade I. Graduates.			
Urban	500	600	700
Rural	450	550	650
Grade II. Non-Graduates.			
Urban	450	550	650
Rural	400	500	550
(c) Principal Teaching School.			
Grade I. Graduates	850	1,000	
Grade II. Non-Graduates	750	850	
Instruction Supervisor.			
Grade I. Graduates	750	850	
Grade II. Non-Graduates	650	750	

TEACHING STATUS	Number on Register								
	Under 80			80-100			Over 100		
	Length of Service								
	Under 5 yrs.	5-10 yrs.	Over 10 yrs.	Under 5 yrs.	5-10 yrs.	Over 10 yrs.	Under 5 yrs.	5-10 yrs.	Over 10 yrs.
(a) Head.									
Urban	500	550	600	525	575	625	575	625	675
Rural	450	500	550	475	525	575	525	575	625
	Number on Register								
	Under 280 Under 7 classes			280-560 Over 7 classes			Over 560 Over 14 classes		
(b) Head.									
Junior Secondary School.									
Grade I. Graduates.									
Urban			550			625			700
Rural			500			575			650
Grade II. Non-Graduates.									
Urban			500			575			650
Rural			450			525			600
	Number of Pupils								
	Under 400 Under 10 classes			400-800 Over 10 classes			Over 880 Over 22 classes		
(c) Head.									
Senior Secondary School.									
Grade I. Graduates.									
Urban			650			800			1,000
Rural			600			700			850
Grade II. Non-Graduates.									
Urban			600			700			850
Rural			550			650			800

THE VALUE OF THE ROUBLE

It is impossible to translate the rouble into English currency. The Soviet Union has a managed currency, which is designed to enable the workers by hand and brain to consume the goods produced and enjoy the services supplied. Thus the value of the rouble increases with increased production. In the abnormal conditions of war, the rouble decreased in value, owing to labour being used non-productively, but the decrease was negligible for rationed goods in State shops, and there was no increase in rent. The value of the rouble is high for goods or services in plentiful supply and low for non-essential things in short supply. For example, I remember in 1936, when oranges were a rare luxury, paying the equivalent of two and sixpence for an orange; on the other hand, I paid the equivalent of thirty shillings for a journey that in England would cost four pounds. One can only compare the goods and services the teachers in the Soviet Union and Britain get.

The cost of living in the U.S.S.R. has been falling steeply since 1945. In June 1947 unrationed dairy products, fruit and vegetables, fell by thirty to forty per cent. Given a good harvest in 1947, the cost of living will continue to fall. So if to-day—June 1947—the Soviet teacher lives, as regards basic goods, about as well as the English teacher—he (or she) is, in the summer, much better off for fruit and vegetables. In six months' time he will be feeding better than his English opposite, and particularly so if he lives in the country.

The Soviet teacher is considerably worse off than his English colleague as regards housing, which is to be expected, in view of the war devastation; and women particularly are, on the whole, worse dressed, i.e., clothing is poorer in quality, than that of the English teachers.

On the other hand, the Soviet teacher does not pay more and may

pay less, than ten per cent of his salary as rent. He has a free medical service, which ensures the best and most specialised services that may be required. The children—the majority of women as well as men are married—receive free education up to fifteen and, if they do good work, free higher education. Pensions, sickness benefit, etc., are non-contributory. Travelling within the Soviet Union—a sixth of the land surface of the earth—is very cheap. In the clubs run by the teachers' unions they can enjoy first-class professional music and theatre, free or at little cost. A certain number of tickets into the theatre, concert hall, opera or ballet can be obtained during the year. Thus, whilst in worldly goods Soviet teachers are worse off than their British colleagues, in social services and in cultural opportunities they are better off.

APPENDIX III

TEACHER-TRAINING FOR PRIMARY GRADE TEACHERS

Hours Per Week

Subject	Class I	Class II	Class III
Russian Language and method	4	5	4
Literature	3	3	3
Mathematics and Arithmetic method	6	5	3
History and method	3	3	4
Constitution of U.S.S.R.	—	—	1
Geography and method	3	2	2
Nature Study and method	3	3	2
Physics	2	2	—
Education and method	2	2	2
Psychology	1	—	—
Drawing and method	1	2	2
Writing and method	1	1	—
Singing and method	2	1	1
Physical Training	4	4	4
School Practice	—	2	6
Workshop and Agriculture	1	1	2
	36	36	36

APPENDIX IV

THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PARENTS' COMMITTEE

THE chairman of the Parents' Committee sits on the School Staff Committee representing the interests of the parents.

Every member has the right to introduce for the consideration of the Committee, and of the Staff Committee, questions which affect the school. The chairman of the Parents' Committee and the Head of the school must see that the matter raised is put on the agenda for the next meeting.

The decisions of the Parents' Committee, after approval by the Head, are binding on every member of the committee and must be carried out in good time. Members of the Parents' Committee who take no active part in the life of the school, on the representation of the chairman, may be recalled by those who elected them, until the next election.

The Parents' Committee is responsible to the Head of the school, and to the general meeting of school parents. The individual members of the committee are responsible to their working committee (presidium) and to the general meeting of class parents.

The Parents' Committee must present a report to the Head not less than once a term, and to the general meeting of School Parents, twice a year.

Individual members of the committee report to the general meeting of class parents once a term and as and when required to the Parents' Committee at its meetings.

At the end of the year, before the election of the new Parents' Committee, the chairman presents a report of the committee's activity to the Staff Committee.

The Parents' Committee must keep Minutes of its meetings and of the General Meeting of School Parents.

The Minutes are to be kept in a special book numbered and threaded, and must have the school stamp and the signature of the Head.

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All Minutes are kept in the school.

All correspondence concerning the business of the Parents' Committee is signed by the Head of the school and the chairman of the committee.

At every committee meeting there must be a check up to see that the decisions taken have been put into effect. The School Inspectors supervise the activities of Parents' Committees and must help them in every possible way.

General guidance of Parents' Committees has been placed in the hands of the local education authorities.

APPENDIX V

INSTITUTIONS UNDER THE MINISTRY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

- (1) 30 Universities.
- (2) 20 Polytechnical Institutes.
- (3) 35 Mechanics-Engineering Institutes.
- (4) 22 Mining-metallurgy Institutes.
- (5) 13 Chemical-technological Institutes.
- (6) 18 Building Institutes.
- (7) 3 Communications Institutes.
- (8) 4 Geodesy and Meteorology Institutes.
- (9) 9 Textile, Typography and Light Industry Institutes.
- (10) 12 Food Industry Institutes.
- (11) 13 Forestry and Timber-economy Institutes.
- (12) 86 Agricultural Institutes.
- (13) 28 Economics Institutes.
- (14) 9 Law Institutes.
- (15) 3 Foreign Language Institutes.

A total of 305 institutes.

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